

Peres calls for Palestinian state, economic ties with Israel

PAPHOS (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Tuesday called for the establishment of a Palestinian state, which he said should be linked economically to Israel.

"I feel that without a Palestinian state, we [Israel] can't remain a Jewish state," Mr. Peres told a meeting of 60 youth leaders from Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Palestine.

The young men and women had come to this western Cypriot coastal resort for a conference organised by the Peres Centre for Peace.

Recalling the secret negotiations in Oslo, Norway, that led to the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace accord, Mr. Peres said he and the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had "reached the conclusion that it was terrible for Israel to dominate the Palestinian people."

He added: "Once the Palestinian entity was born, it started to grow. This is something nobody can stop, just as you can't stop the development of a child which every day becomes more mature, more ready."

He said it was right for the Palestinians to move toward statehood, a move opposed by hard-line Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"There are four million Arabs and 4.7 million Jews, and the choice is very clear: either we have two separate states or one state, neither Jewish nor Palestinian," Mr. Peres said.

His count of Palestinians includes about one million Arab-Israelis who are citizens of the Jewish state and 2.8 million Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Mr. Peres also said he

believed Israel was making "a terrible mistake to see Palestinians as a source of cheap labour."

He proposed that economic cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli states would evolve into a single market with no customs tariffs and no restrictions on the movement of labour, such as in the European Union.

"Both parties will live on their brains. As you cannot extract high-technology from the land itself," Mr. Peres said.

In an indirect response to Mr. Netanyahu's repeated calls for a peace based on security, Mr. Peres said: "Let's not divide but unite, not as a security issue, but as an economic opportunity, for you cannot build a peace good for war. Build a peace good for peace."



WOMAN DANCES AT TRAVEL SHOW: A Tunisian woman, clad in a traditional outfit, dances Tuesday at her country's stand in the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai. Over 530 exhibitors from 40 countries are taking part in the Arabian Travel Market, one of the biggest fairs to promote tourism in the Middle East and Arab countries (AFP photo)

Iran mourns death of Shiite leader in divided political atmosphere

TEHRAN (AFP) — Millions of Iranians are mourning the 7th-century Shiite Muslim leader Imam Hussein, a symbol of the 1979 Islamic revolution, in a spectacular gesture of unity belying widening political divisions and bitter factional disputes.

The entire nation started wearing black a week ago, when the Arabic month of Muharram began, and streets, government buildings and mosques are draped in black banners scribbled in Farsi and Arabic paying tribute to Hussein.

Mourning ceremonies will peak on Wednesday and Thursday, which are commemorated by Shiites as "Tasua" (the ninth) and "Ashura" (the tenth) of Muharram, the day Hussein was "martyred" along with 71 followers in a battle against an army of Calif Yazid of the Umayyad dynasty in Karbala, present-day Iraq.

Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Mohammad, and his epic battle is a symbol of righteousness and self-denial for Shiites and he is a role model for his sense of justice, courage and defiance against "oppression."

Although sharply divided along political and ideological lines, Iranians, the overwhelming majority of whom are Shiites, unite on this event to pay respect to their religious idol.

Even members of the secular middle-class attend emotional and noisy street parades and nocturnal ceremonies where they indulge in acts of self-flagellation in sympathy with the imam, viewed as an "innocent" crusader killed in an unfair battle.

Women and children visit mosques or make-shift bungalows set up for the event, where they distribute free meals, known as "Nazi", provided in charity by the more well-off faithful.

But while Ashura is a deep-rooted cultural tradition and an occasion for social gatherings, since the revolution, it has also been used as a political tool to mobilise the masses.

Hussein was a role model for Iranian revolutionaries struggling against the former shah and for Islamic volunteers fighting Iraq in their 1980-1988 conflict.

Wave after wave of idealistic young men fell to their death during the war as they emulated their Imam in search of "martyrdom."

But while all sectors of the population remain faithful to Ashura as a religious symbol, the event is observed this year amid worsening factional fighting.

The moderate faction has seized upon Ashura to preach tolerance and freedom, but the hardline conservatives, inked over the present mood of openness, have used it to justify a backlash.

President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate, decried the use of Ashura for "partisan interests."

"We should not use Imam Hussein for our banal partisan interests," he said. "Ashura allowed Muslims to live freely. It became a symbol of liberty for the human race."

Moderate Culture Minister Ayatollah Mobarajani shares the president's non-violent interpretation of Ashura. "Imam Hussein's whole life was about love and freedom. In the battle of Karbala, he never resorted to violence and cruelty," he said, in an apparent allusion to the present political situation in Iran.

Since Mr. Khatami's election as president last May, his supporters have been locked in a tug of war with hardline conservatives, who strongly resist the push for democratic reform, fearing it would undermine the principles of the revolution.

"Some people think there are new grounds to express their false ideas about freedom of expression. Why don't we stop these contaminated pens... Have we forgotten our slogans?" thundered arch-conservative Ayatollah Ahmad Janati.

"Why do we allow them to raise doubts about our values. If we allow them this, nothing will last of Islam and the revolution," he added. "This way we will distance ourselves from the cause of Imam Hussein, the cause of martyrdom."

Arafat receives death threat in London

LONDON (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat received a death threat shortly after arriving in London to attend the Middle East peace talks, sources close to the Palestinian delegation said late on Monday.

Soon after arriving at his central London hotel in the early hours of Monday, Mr. Arafat was warned by an English-speaking caller that he would be assassinated during his stay in London, the sources said.

They added that British security forces had been notified of the death threat, and that extra measures to protect the Palestinian leader had been put in place.

Scotland Yard refused to comment on the death threat, or the level of police protection for Mr. Arafat. "We don't discuss personal security matters," a spokesman said.

Bomb attack on Algerian train injures up to 14

ALGIERS (AFP) — A bomb attack on an express train injured between two and 14 people in Algeria as it was heading from the capital to the western city of Oran, press reports said Tuesday.

Some newspapers said that two home-made bombs went off, derailling the first railway car and slightly wounding the driver and a passenger, but the daily La Tribune said 14 people were hurt, four seriously.

Most press reports said that security forces made other explosive devices safe on the line, where the train was attacked in the Ain Defla region 150 kilometres from the capital.

According to La Tribune, a single bomb hidden in a bag caused the casualties, but the paper did not say whether the device was reported to have been on the train or on the track.

Several trains have been attacked, sometimes with deadly results, in the Ain Defla region and the nearby districts of Chlef, Medea and Blida.

Israel's high court bars closure of pirate settler radio station

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's supreme court issued a restraining order Tuesday barring authorities from closing a pirate radio station operated for years with impunity by Jewish settlers, officials said.

The court ruling came in response to an appeal by operators of Channel 7 against its possible closure, although authorities have made no explicit move to end the station's broadcasts.

Last month Attorney General Eliyahu Rubinstein announced that Channel 7, which broadcasts from a ship in international waters off Israel, was operating illegally and should be shut down unless measures were taken to make it legal.

Rubinstein's threat to shut the station sparked angry protests by far right parties in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition government, notably the pro-settlement National Religious Party which accounts for nine seats of the government's 61-seat majority in the 120-member parliament.

But his ruling also prompted the government to begin proceedings to legalise the settler operation as a "regional radio station" authorised to broadcast to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. Netanyahu pledged to legalise Channel 7 during his election campaign two years ago, but never acted on his promise.

Legal authorities had long sought to close Channel 7, which along with other pirate radio stations authorised communications, notably at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport.

But the Shin Bet internal security service warned that such action would spark violence by militant settlers.

Hamas founder sees London talks as failure, urges confrontation

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The founder of the Palestinian Islamist Movement, Hamas, here on Tuesday predicted the failure of the Middle East peace talks in London and said the only way forward was to confront Israel.

Benjamin Netanyahu has so far rejected the proposal.

"The London conference will not achieve any progress concerning the recovery of the rights of the Palestinian people," Sheikh Yassin said of the talks involving Mr. Netanyahu, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

"Given Israel's intransigence and the U.S. unconditional support [of Israel], the conference will be a waste of time and useless," he told reporters.

"The solution will come only through a return to the trench of struggle... After the failure of the PNA to regain our rights, Hamas has no alternative but to return to the Islamic struggle to achieve self-determination," he said.

Sheikh Yassin, whose group has carried out a string of deadly anti-Israeli bombings, was in the UAE on a Middle East tour. The Hamas founder has already visited Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Iran, and also plans a stay in Kuwait.

Khartoum press accuses SPLA of massacring 18 in west Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Southern Sudanese rebels have massacred 18 members of the Missairiyah tribe and killed 3,000 heads of livestock in western Sudan near the border with Chad, the daily Al Rai Al Akher reported Tuesday.

The slaughter took place Saturday near the city of Abyei in West Kordofan state, the paper said, quoting witnesses.

Press reports have recently accused fighters of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of attacking another Arab tribe, the Rizaiga, in South Darfur state, also in the west, leaving 42 people dead after slaying 5,000 heads of cattle.

A West Darfur official said last month that fighting between Arab and non-Arab tribes had claimed more than 100 lives in the state in recent months.

The state's information minister, Mohammad Saleh Al Sanousi, said 68 villages and encampments were partially destroyed.

The incidents affected about 4,000 families and caused some 3.5 billion Sudanese pounds (about \$2 million) in losses.

A high-ranking army military delegation last month reviewed security measures being taken to quell armed tribal conflicts in the region but also to curb attacks on the Rizaiga and Missairiyah tribes blamed on Major General Kerubino Kyanyen, a recent defector from government ranks.

Turkish court acquits two in Kurdish language course case

ISTANBUL (AP) — A court on Tuesday acquitted two members of a Kurdish cultural organisation of charges that they conducted a banned course in the Kurdish language, one of the defendants said.

The pair work for the Kurdish Culture and Research Foundation, which seeks more cultural freedom for Turkey's 12 million Kurds — a group forbidden to use its language in education or broadcasting.

Yilmaz Camlibel, the foundation's president, and one of his aides, Mehmet Celal Baykara, had faced up to two years in prison if convicted of holding an unauthorised language course.

The court acquitted them because their course was not open to the public, Mr. Camlibel told the Associated Press by telephone. He said the prosecutor did not oppose the verdict and would not appeal the case.

But Mr. Camlibel said the court ruled that the foundation can no longer run a Kurdish language course.

The case resulted from a police raid last year at the foundation's headquarters in Istanbul. But the acquittal seemed to fall short of Mr. Camlibel's expectations.

"We are determined to carry on this struggle to gain our educational rights in Kurdish," Mr. Camlibel said, noting that his foundation is suing the education ministry to allow it to start a similar Kurdish course.

Hundreds of writers, journalists and politicians have been jailed in Turkey for promoting Kurdish cultural rights or allegedly supporting Kurdish guerrillas seeking autonomy in southeastern Turkey.

The autonomy struggle has claimed some 37,000 lives since 1984 in clashes between the rebels and Turkish troops.

Germans learning anti-terror techniques in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Two top German military officials visited Jerusalem's Old City Tuesday with the commander of Israel's border police as part of a training session on anti-terror tactics.

Israel and Germany have been stepping up cooperation on military training. On Monday, 17 German army cadets began training with Israeli battalions, and a group of senior Israeli and Palestinian police officials are on a nine-day visit to Germany.

Rudiger Kass, head of the ministry overseeing the 50,000-member German border police and German border police chief Gunter Schoel spent about an hour in the walled Old City, which is a frequent

flashpoint for Arab-Israeli tensions.

On Monday, the German officials visited the base of an elite Israeli anti-terror unit, but the tactics demonstrated for them were a military secret.

Because Israel has such extensive experience in coping with terrorist attacks, German officials are particularly interested in its tactics, said Israel border police spokesman Yehoshua Bauer.

On Wednesday, Major General Jack Dado, head of Israel's border guard and the German officials' host, will take them to the West Bank to observe a special Israeli unit whose troops disguise themselves in Arab dress to gather intelligence.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10Mr. Bogus Show
15:30Oliver Twist
16:00The Album Show
17:00Ushuaia
18:00 Drama — Acapulco Bay
19:00Le Journal
19:15Science Magazine
19:30 Comedy — Campus Cops
20:00 Doc. — Envoye Special
21:10Kung-Fu
22:00News in English
22:30Mini-series
23:59End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:15Fajr
05:41Sunrise/Duha
12:32Dhuhr
16:12Asr
19:23Maghreb
20:50Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel.
4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel.
4622366
Anglican Church Tel.
4624853/4624811.

St. Afra Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweifeh Tel. 5920146
The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 802679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
The effect of the heat wave

will continue today. Clouds will appear at different altitudes, winds northwesterly becoming easterly moderate in the afternoon. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Amman 35, Aqaba 36
Humidity readings: Amman 18 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 35, Aqaba 36
Humidity readings: Amman 18 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Nidal As'ad751672
Dr. Yousef Naser7511404
Dr. Issam Asmar895054
Dr. Abdul Rahim Mostafa 744685
Firas pharmacy5661912
Ferdows pharmacy890280
Al Asema pharmacy4637055
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730
Yacoub pharmacy4644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Nabrook pharmacy4623672

Najib pharmacy847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Hafez Salifit915414
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue4630341
Civil Defence Emergency199
Rescue Police 192 4621111 4637777
Fire Brigade4617101
Blood Bank775121
Highway Police843402
Traffic Police396390
Public Security Dept. 4630321
Hotel Complaints5603800
Price Complaints5661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs5661101
Jordan Television773111
Radio Jordan774111
Water Authority5680100

J. Electricity Authority

815615
Electric Power Co. 4636381
RJ Flight Information 44 53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 44 53200
HOSPITALS
4642362
AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery5921199
The Islamic Abdi5666317
Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 836813, 856856
Luzula4630195
Khalidi Maternity4644281/6
Akileh Maternity4642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman4636140
Palestine Shmeisani5607071
Shmeisani Hospital5699131
University Hospital5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir775111/26
Army, Marka891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/30
Arnal Hospital5674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital09983323
Zarqa National Hospital09900560
Ibn Sina Hospital09986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital0999099

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital02275555
Greek Catholic Hospital02272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital02247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 44 (52700) or 44(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:30Damascus (RJ)
09:30Jeddah (RJ)
09:45Larnaca (RJ)
09:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
15:35 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:45Madrid (RJ)

18:00Paris (RJ)
18:45 London, Istanbul (RJ)
19:05Rome (RJ)
19:50 Frankfurt, Brussels (RJ)
00:15Beirut (RJ)
00:55Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights

10:30Cairo (MS)
11:00Sanaa, Hudaidah (Y)
11:30Kuwait (KU)
12:30Jeddah (SV)
14:10Tunis (TU)
14:10Bahrain (GF)
15:05Vienna (OS)
16:30Algiers (AH)
18:35 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
19:05Frankfurt (LH)
21:10Beirut (ME)
23:20Istanbul (TK)
23:20Amsterdam (KL)
23:45Athens, Beirut (OA)
00:15London (BA)

DEPARTURES

06:30Larnaca (RJ)
08:50 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

10:50Rome (RJ)
11:40Istanbul, London (RJ)

20:25Colombo (RJ)
20:35Beirut (RJ)
21:00New Delhi (RJ)
21:10Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
21:15Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:20Bombay (RJ)
21:25Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:35Cairo (RJ)
22:15Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
23:40Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:35Larnaca (CY)
07:30Paris (AF)
08:45Beirut (ME)
09:20London (BA)
11:30Cairo (MS)
11:30Ta'iz, Sanaa (Y)
12:45Kuwait (KU)
14:00Jeddah (SV)
15:00 Bahrain, Muscat (GF)
15:10Tunis (TU)
15:30Vienna (OS)
17:20Sharjah (AE)
20:30 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
00:40 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
04:00Beirut, Athens (OA)

Royal Wings (RW)

08:00Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
17:30Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)
22:50Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

Home News

Princess Sarvath returns from Qatar

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Sarvath returned home Tuesday after concluding a three-day official visit to Qatar during which she held talks with Qatari officials on education, health and women's issues.

Princess Sarvath visited several Qatari educational institutions and visited for the first time the Qatari Museum of Islamic Art, which houses a collection of Islamic art and artifacts.

Princess Sarvath accompanied by HRH Princess Rahma, who is visiting on a private visit, and a delegation of officials, returned to Amman Tuesday.

U.N. advisor says crimes violate

By Rana Hussein
The Jordan Times

AMMAN — A UN Human Rights Commission field expert on the situation in the West Bank and Gaza, Michael Hammar, said on Tuesday that the actions of the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip violated international law.

Mr. Hammar, who is a member of the UN Human Rights Commission, said that the actions of the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the construction of the West Bank barrier, the expansion of Jewish settlements, and the use of force against the Palestinian people, were in violation of international law.

He said that the actions of the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were also in violation of the UN Charter and the UN Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Court verdict on Sh

By Rana Hussein
The Jordan Times

AMMAN — The State Security Court, trying opposition leader Leith Shbeilat on charges of sparking pro-Iraqi demonstrations in the southern town of Zarqa, is expected to announce a verdict on May 12.

Shbeilat, 34, was arrested in Zarqa in February, and his case was transferred to the State Security Court in Amman.

Shbeilat is accused of leading a group of about 500 people in a demonstration in Zarqa in February, during which they burned tires and set fire to a police station.

Shbeilat's case was one of several cases involving opposition leaders that were transferred to the State Security Court in Amman.

Shbeilat's case was also one of several cases that were transferred to the State Security Court in Amman, which is a court of last resort for cases involving political activists.

Princess Sarvath returns from Qatar

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Sarvath returned home Tuesday after concluding a three-day official visit to Qatar during which she held talks with Qatari officials on education, health and women-related issues.

Princess Sarvath visited several Qatari educational institutions and called for the exchange of experience between the two countries in areas such as speech and learning difficulties.

In her meeting with Qatari Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Kafoud, Princess Sarvath discussed issues pertaining to the exchange of teachers and allocating seats at the Phonetec Research Centre at the University of Jordan for teachers and educationalists from Qatar.

Her talks also touched upon the Crown Prince's Award and cooperation between Princess Sarvath College and Qatari educational institutions.

The princess called at the Qatari national museum and the aquarium.

Princess Sarvath, accompanied by HRH Princess Rahmah, made the visit upon an invitation by Sheikhah Mozhah, wife of Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad.



Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi opens the conference (Petra photo)

Kurdi announces 10-year plan to fight heart disease

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Cardiac Society Tuesday opened a three-day international conference at the Radisson SAS Hotel with the participation of delegates from Arab and foreign countries.

Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi opened the meeting, at which 60 working papers are to be reviewed.

Outlining the major strides Jordan has made in the medical profession, Dr. Kurdi noted that in the past 20

years, the Kingdom has established itself as a regional medical hub offering advanced treatment to thousands of citizens from Arab states.

Jordan's specialists are in constant contact with the world of medicine for updates on the latest developments in the field, he said, enabling the country's hospitals to provide advanced medical services.

Describing heart disease as one of the main killer diseases in Jordan, Dr. Kurdi said the ministry has prepared a 10-year plan to help

citizens avoid the disease by encouraging sound lifestyles.

The president of the Jordan Medical Association, Bassam Dajani, outlined the association's long-term plans and programmes, which include seminars and conferences involving delegates from developed countries to facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences.

On the sidelines of the conference, Dr. Kurdi opened an exhibition of various Arab and foreign-made drugs and medical equipment.

Cabinet reviews King's visit to Tunisia

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Tuesday reviewed the outcome of His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Tunisia as well as the results of the Joint Jordanian-Tunisian Higher Committee meeting, during which the two sides updated a 1995 economic and trade agreement.

Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki told the press after the regular Cabinet session that the joint committee concluded a number of protocols on Tunisian-Jordanian cooperation in the areas of investment and increasing bilateral tourist and agricultural exchanges.

Dr. Mulki said the Cabinet also reviewed the outcome of a visit to Washington by a Jordanian delegation two weeks ago, during which topics connected with the protection of intellectual property rights were discussed.

The Washington meeting

resulted in agreement on working out an executive programme for Jordan to adopt internationally accepted criteria related to intellectual property rights to end at a time coinciding with Jordan's entry into the World Trade Organisation, Dr. Mulki said.

The Council approved a draft law on industry and trade and referred it to Parliament, according to the minister, who noted that the new draft provides for regulations concerning encouraging competition and boosting national production.

Dr. Mulki said the Cabinet has ended discussion on several articles of the anti-trust law, which will be referred to Parliament by next week.

On his meetings Monday with Israeli Industry Minister Natan Sharansky, Dr. Mulki said their discussions covered customs problems hindering Jordanian exports, particularly cement, to Israel and the

self-rule regions of Palestine.

Dr. Mulki announced that the Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli ministers of industry will hold a meeting in Amman before the end of this month to follow up discussions on trade.

Also at the meeting, the Council of Ministers approved the Jordanian-European Association Agreement, which was signed by the two parties in Brussels last November.

The agreement aims at promoting cultural, social and economic ties between Jordan and the countries of the European Union and improving the living conditions in the Kingdom, enhancing productivity and encouraging regional cooperation.

The Council, which met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, appointed former minister Abdul Razzak Tubeishat as government rep-

resentative to the Jordan Farmers Association.

The ministers approved an executive programme on cultural and scientific cooperation between Jordan and Sudan covering 1998-2000 and authorised Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan to sign the agreement.

The Council formed a delegation representing the Agricultural Marketing Corporation (AMC) to conduct studies on the Romanian and Hungarian markets demand for Jordanian agricultural products. The delegation will visit the countries for this purpose from May 17-24.

The Cabinet also formed a delegation led by Minister of Transport Sami Gammoh to take part in a seminar organised by the International Civil Aviation Organisation from May 24-28 in Cairo to discuss questions related to travellers' safety.

FAO grants \$283,000 in aid to agricultural corporation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Rome-based U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has decided to give the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) \$283,000 in technical aid to help establish a data system to organise credit facilities in the rural regions of Jordan.

ACC Director General Nimer Nabulsi, who made the announcement Tuesday, said the grant entails providing equipment to and training personnel at four ACC branches in the first stage.

He noted the technical aid is part of an agreement signed earlier by Jordan and the FAO.

Mr. Nabulsi added that the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has promised to provide the ACC with technical aid to help develop its computer system.

Speaking after an ACC board meeting chaired by Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Kheisra, Mr. Nabulsi said the board discussed a report on the ACC's finances, the closing accounts of the past year and ACC activities.

Referring to loans provided to Jordanian farmers, Mr. Nabulsi pointed out that the corporation's assets were estimated at JD96.1 million at the end of last year while the total volume of outstanding and uncollected loans to farmers amounted to JD87 million.

But he said the ACC last year provided 6,707 farmers with JD16.8 million in loans and collected JD19.9 million in repayments, an amount that registered an increase of 9.3 per cent over the 1996 figure.

The board has adopted a new approach by directing 82 per cent of its loans to small farmers, who Mr. Nabulsi said were using the money to develop lands and water resources, purchase farm equipment, increase livestock wealth and poultry production, and build agricultural installations.

According to Mr. Nabulsi, small farmers in the badia and rural regions of Jordan receive JD2,000-3,000 loans.

Groundbreaking ceremony held for new Wadi Mousa wastewater plant

By Ahmad Khatib
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Tuesday began work on the \$26.7 million Wadi Mousa treatment plant, the first and largest project of an extended programme to increase water supplies to the area's inhabitants.

The project was officially launched at a cornerstone-laying ceremony at the construction site by Minister of Water and Irrigation Muthann Haddadin and visiting USAID administrator Brian Atwood.

When completed, the overall water system project, estimated at \$43 million, will provide the 17,000 residents of Wadi Mousa, Taiba, Um Sayhoun, and Beida with 1.25 million cubic metres per year of treated wastewater for agricultural use.

In remarks at the ceremony, Dr. Haddadin stressed the importance of this project and praised the cooperation between Jordan and USAID.

Mr. Atwood said the treatment plant and the water sys-

tem project represented the culmination of two years of intensive design efforts financed by Jordan and USAID, which is contributing \$25 million.

"Working together to ensure the more efficient management and use of water resources is one of the major goals of the USAID programme in Jordan," Mr. Atwood remarked.

Last month, Dr. Haddadin and USAID signed four contracts, two with Jordanian firms and two with American companies, to construct the plant.

According to William McDonnell, the project manager of one of the American firms, the plant and the wastewater collection system will be built in three stages. The first consists of the actual plant, which will be able to process 3,400 cubic metres of wastewater per day. In the second stage, four wastewater pump stations will be built in each of the four towns covered by the project, Wadi Mousa, Taiba, B'doul, and Beida. The third stage will feature the construction of a

13.5-kilometre wastewater main to carry sewage to the new wastewater treatment plant, located at Sad Um Al Hiran, just outside Petra.

As part of the construction of the new water system, a number of construction projects will be carried out. These include, pumping substations in the area, reservoirs, network replacements, and wastewater collection systems.

The German and French governments are also providing \$10 million to finance the water system network for the Wadi Mousa area.

In addition to local residents, the project aims at supplying water to the region's hotels. There are at present 26 existing hotels with 2,700 beds in the area, and it is predicted that by the year 2010 there will be approximately 40 hotels with 4,000 beds in the Wadi Mousa area.

"It is therefore crucial that adequate water and wastewater infrastructure is in place before the growing tourism industry overwhelms the present system," said the project's feasibility study.

U.N. advisor says legislation on honour crimes violates international law

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A criminal and corruption consultant and field advisor at the United Nations said he was outraged by crimes of honour committed against women in Jordan and slammed legislation dealing with such offences.

Michael Hartmann, also assistant district attorney, Sex Crimes Prosecution Team (rape, child molestation and murder) in San Francisco, California, said current legislation dealing with such crimes violated human rights and international treaties.

"I believe that any law which provides defence to a crime based on gender is a violation of human rights and also violates several international agreements," he told the Jordan Times in an interview on Monday.

Mr. Hartmann was referring to Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code (No. 16, 1960), which provides reduced or waived penalties to persons found guilty of killing female relatives who commit adultery or are found in an adulterous situation, such as talking to a stranger.

"It is shocking to me that if a man kills his female relative and her lover after seeing them with his own eyes consenting to sex, he can then be told by the law he did nothing wrong," he said.

If the law does not set the



Michael Hartmann

death penalty for adultery, then "why should it encourage a male relative to deliver the death penalty for the same thing?" he asked.

A total of 25 women were killed in the Kingdom in the name of honour last year, mostly on suspicion of illicit relationship — a major point of criticism by international human rights organisations.

This year, a total of nine women have been murdered by male relatives to cleanse family honour.

Mr. Hartmann is currently on a fact-finding mission to Jordan to see if he can help the Kingdom improve legislation dealing with domestic violence and child abuse.

The expert, who said he has helped several countries restructure their judiciary, stressed that he was mainly interested in reforming criminal laws, especially laws deal-

ing with women and children as well as domestic and sexual violence.

"I am here because I was invited by the United States Information Service (USIS) to assist in any way I can in Jordan, based on my understanding of the intersection of the criminal law and human rights," Mr. Hartmann said.

The Ministry of Justice is putting the final touches on a draft penal code that is expected to tighten penalties on individuals committing crimes against women and children.

Mr. Hartmann said the interest the government has taken in preventing violence against women and children needs to be supported by reforms to the criminal laws and emergency protection orders (restraining orders).

Mr. Hartmann, a law professor at Boalt Hall School of Law for seven years, said he met with the National Task Force for Children (NTFC), which recently completed drafting laws dealing with sexual molestation and violence against children.

"I was impressed with their progressive and sort out solutions," he said.

The legislation committee at the NTFC, chaired by Her Majesty Queen Noor, recently finished drafting Jordan's Rights of Child Act, which urges the government to provide all necessary conditions to ensure a proper upbringing for children.

The proposed law stipulates that the government should guarantee childhood development and care, which it says is a national, religious and human commitment that stems from spiritual and social values.

Mr. Hartmann said he was impressed with the Family Protection Unit that was established by the Public Security Department in September to deal with domestic violence.

He said its staff and facilities matched those found in similar U.S. institutions. "I hope that the Jordanian government will continue to support further training of the police, medical personnel and prosecutors so that law enforcement objectives and human rights goals as to treatment of victims can work together to provide safety and dignity for women and children who are victims of violence," he said.

Mr. Hartmann, who travelled to several countries to learn about their judiciary and help reform their justice systems, said he had his own concept concerning the rights of the accused and the victims.

He said nations all over the world needed to look at other justice systems to learn from them and to quote some of their articles.

"It is dangerous for any nation to focus and think that they do not need to learn from other systems, including the U.S.," he stressed.

Court verdict on Shbeilat expected next week

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The State Security Court, trying opposition leader Leith Shbeilat on charges of sparking pro-Iraqi unrest in the southern town of Ma'an in February, is expected to declare its verdict on May 12, a judicial source said Tuesday.

The source declined further comment. If convicted, Mr. Shbeilat, former president of the Engineers Association, could get up to four months in jail, lawyers said.

He was released last month on JD2,000 bail after six weeks

in detention.

Mr. Shbeilat's defence attorney, Hussein Mjalli, Monday rested his case at a State Security Court session on Monday and asked for his client's acquittal.

Al Arab Al Yawm newspaper on Tuesday quoted Attorney Mjalli as saying in his closing argument that Mr. Shbeilat's case was politically motivated and was aimed at "restricting the freedom of speech and expression that is guaranteed by the constitution."

Mr. Mjalli also criticised the court's decision to ban press coverage of Mr. Shbeilat's trial.

the newspaper said.

In March of this year, the state prosecutor asked Jordanian newspapers not to publish any information related to Mr. Shbeilat's trial.

Mr. Shbeilat, a former deputy, was detained by police on his way back to Amman after delivering a sermon at Ma'an's main mosque a day before pro-Iraqi unrest broke out in the southern town.

One Jordanian died and dozens more were injured in two days of violence, forcing the government to impose a six-day curfew on the desert town.

The government blamed Mr.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Shbeilat for inciting the unrest.

Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein, in 1992 and 1996, after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

Syrian-Israeli talks would have led to Golan withdrawal — Savir

(Continued from page 1)

Rabin that had to be met by the Syrians: security arrangements, normalisation, and an agreed-upon timetable, in addition to several other factors such as economic and water issues, said Mr. Savir.

"On none of these issues were our demands fully met, least of all in the area of security arrangements," he stated.

"Having said that, we were still in the midst of negotiations when they broke off, and I felt that at the Wye plantation [the site of the negotiations] we had the momentum going in the right direction."

"Negotiations [between Israel and Syria] should be renewed where they left off," Mr. Savir said.

Despite differences in the thinking of

President Hafez Assad and Shimon Peres, a common understanding of the term "comprehensive" had been reached between the Israeli and Syrian negotiators two years ago, he noted.

"The way it was formulated at the time, orally, was that a Syrian-Israeli peace, and a Lebanese-Israeli peace would bring an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It would be matched by normalisation between Arab countries and Israel. That was very fundamental," remarked Mr. Savir.

On the Oslo peace process of which he was a main architect, Mr. Savir said he believed that a "crisis of trust" between the Palestinians and Israelis exists and that "a sense of partnership has to be restored." But he insisted that although

the peace process was in "bad shape, it is still alive."

Mr. Savir dismissed allegations that the Oslo process has failed as a confidence-building measure. He said, however, that final status issues should be tackled soon since the May 1999 deadline, after which the Oslo accords terminate, was approaching.

According to Mr. Savir, a national unity government between the Likud and Labour parties would have to be formed prior to discussions on final status issues.

Jordan's role in final status negotiations is a "purely Jordanian decision," Mr. Savir remarked. However, he expected that the Kingdom would have to be involved in various aspects of the

But Jordan "can and should come in" after final status agreements, when water, energy, and social issues will have to be tackled, added Mr. Savir.

Asked if a federation or confederation between Jordan and the West Bank was an Israeli precondition for a Palestinian state, Mr. Savir noted that there is a growing understanding in both the Labour and Likud parties that it is up to a future Palestinian "entity" to decide what kind of relationship it would have with Jordan.

Mr. Savir is currently involved in the Peres Centre for Peace set up by Mr. Peres last year to enhance regional cooperation in the fields of economics, agriculture, peace education, and information technology.

what's going on

FILMS

Charm's film "The Last Days of Pompeii" is being shown at the British Council. The film is a historical drama about the destruction of the ancient city of Pompeii. It is a black and white film, and it is very well made. The story is about a young man who falls in love with a girl who is a slave. They are both killed when the city is destroyed. The film is very beautiful, and it is a great example of what can be done with a small budget. It is a must-see for anyone who is interested in history or in good filmmaking.

The film "The Last Days of Pompeii" is being shown at the British Council. The film is a historical drama about the destruction of the ancient city of Pompeii. It is a black and white film, and it is very well made. The story is about a young man who falls in love with a girl who is a slave. They are both killed when the city is destroyed. The film is very beautiful, and it is a great example of what can be done with a small budget. It is a must-see for anyone who is interested in history or in good filmmaking.

European Court rejects British beef ban challenge

LUXEMBOURG (AFP) — The European Court of Justice Tuesday rejected Britain's challenge to the legality of the two-year-old worldwide ban on its beef exports.

Britain had challenged the embargo on two points — that the European Commission had overstepped its powers and that the action was disproportionate to the actual threat to human health posed by the disease.

Both arguments were rejected by the Court, which handles disputes over the interpretation of the various treaties on which the European Union is based and legislation arising from them.

Tuesday's ruling follows the first moves to ease the two-year-old embargo. EU governments agreed in March that Britain could resume exports of certain categories of beef produced in Northern Ireland.

The EU imposed a worldwide embargo on British

beef exports on March 27, 1996, after the British government revealed a probable link between Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) — "mad cow" disease — and a new strain of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), a fatal brain-wasting condition in humans.

Given that CJD was a fatal condition with no known cure, the commission could not be said to have overreacted, the court said.

In line with this it rejected Britain's argument that Brussels had acted to protect beef producers in the rest of Europe rather than in the interests of public health.

At the time Britain announced the link, scientists said that the BSE epidemic in British cattle could eventually lead to thousands, possibly tens of thousands, of Britons dying of new variant CJD.

These fears have not been realised. To date 25 Britons have died of the disease and

the most recent estimate from the government's scientific advisors is that between 100 and 1,500 people will die of CJD as a result of eating BSE-infected beef products.

BSE was first recognised in British cattle in the mid 1980s. It is thought now to have developed as a result of the remains of sheep infected with the related disease scrapie being ground up and used for cattle feed.

To date, more than 170,000 British cattle have been diagnosed as having contracted the disease. This compares with a total of less than a thousand in the 14 other EU countries.

The incidence of the disease in British herds is however now rapidly diminishing following the implementation of a ban on the use of meat and bonemeal in feed, a massive cull of cattle exposed to BSE and the introduction of strict new slaughtering controls.

From a peak of 36,682 cases in 1992, the number of new cases of BSE is expected to fall to less than 2,000 this year and less than 100 by 2001, according to the British government projections.

The decision to lift the ban on beef from Northern Ireland reflects the much lower incidence of BSE among the province's herds, which are mainly grass-fed.

Northern Ireland also has a long-standing computer-based registration system for cattle which makes it much easier to provide a guarantee that they have never come into contact with BSE-infected animals.

A similar accord to ease the ban for beef from cattle in other parts of Britain which have been certified as BSE-free is expected by the end of this year.

Progress could be faster if scientists from EU governments agree to officially recognise one of the two BSE diagnostic tests currently being developed in Switzerland and Ireland.

Four dead, nine injured in fire aboard Australian navy ship

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — Four sailors died and nine were injured in one of Australia's worst peacetime naval accidents when a fireball swept through the engine room of the supply vessel Westralia.

Crew members spent 90 minutes fighting the blaze as frigates, tugs and a submarine surrounded the stricken vessel in the ocean before the fire was contained by flooding the hold with foam.

All ships in the area were ordered to assist with fire-fighting equipment and medical supplies. The fire broke out when crew were working on a ruptured fuel line during trials eight nautical miles northwest of the Western Australian port of Fremantle.

Three men and one woman died almost instantly, Commander Alan Johnston said, adding that the blaze had caused major damage to the ship.

A medical officer was transferred to the boat by helicopter to help the injured crew who were treated for burns, smoke

inhalation and shock before being taken to a Perth hospital, he said.

Thick smoke prevented rescuers from reaching the dead for several hours.

"The ship's firefighting team attempted to put the fire out but they were forced back by the flames and smoke," Cmdr. Johnston told a news conference.

"Initial reports of four missing are confirmed and it is my melancholy duty to inform we have four bodies as a result of that search."

A hospital spokesman said injured survivors "are terribly upset about what happened on the Westralia this morning."

"This has been a terrible experience for them. The ship took on some water and was listing and it was a little while before the navy was able to fly them out."

"They're all in nervous shock. Some of them are on oxygen, some of them have drips, one of them has had some anaesthetics."

The 40,870-tonne Westralia, the Australian navy's largest vessel, was fully laden with 20,000

tonnes of fuel before deployment in South East Asia Wednesday.

It was purchased from the British Royal Navy in 1989. Defence Minister Ian McLachlan said the ship, which has a crew of 90, had been towed to safe waters. A full military inquiry would be carried out and action taken if negligence was discovered, he said.

The Westralia was part of Australia's naval contingent sent to the Gulf war and helped in the dramatic southern Ocean rescue of British yachtsmen Tony Bullimore and Frenchman Thierry Dubois.

The worst naval accident in Australia's history happened in February 1964 when the aircraft carrier Melbourne sliced through the destroyer Voyager, killing 82 men.

In 1987 two sailors died when their submarine Otama submerged beneath the surface off Sydney. Three sailors on the destroyer Stalwart died in 1985 from inhaling poison gases generated in the ship's sewage tank.

French right-wing candidate sentenced for 'favouritism'

TOULON, France (AFP) — Cécile Le Chevallier, the far-right National Front candidate who narrowly lost a weekend parliamentary election, was Tuesday given a one-month suspended jail sentence for favouritism in hiring.

Ms. Le Chevallier, a city councillor and wife of the National Front mayor of Toulon, was also fined 30,000 francs (\$5,000) for encouraging the hiring of "either National Front sympathisers or totally neutral elements."

She made the appeal in a Dec. 4 letter to the head of the city's youth leisure activities association.

When the affair emerged before the by-election, Ms. Le Chevallier alleged it amounted to "a political machination" and that she had merely sought to put people she trusted into positions in an organisation where she suspected mismanagement.

Thai man bids for world record for living with snakes

BANGKOK (AFP) — A Thai man Tuesday shut himself in a room with more than 100 snakes and vowed not to emerge for a week in an effort to set a record for living in confinement with the venomous reptiles.

Boonreung Buachan, a 27-year-old resident of northeastern Si Sa Ket province, entered a specially built glass room at a central Bangkok mall watched by a crowd of bemused onlookers.

Wearing goggles to protect his eyes, he said he had been working with snakes since he was two and did not fear the ordeal. In addition to the snakes, among them several king cobras, the room where he will spend the next seven days and nights also contains 20 scorpions and 30 poisonous centipedes.



Riot police battle with students during an anti-government protest at Parahyangan University in Bandung, 120 kilometres southeast of Jakarta. About 500 students participated in the protest in which several were injured (Reuters photo)

Mob torches shops in riot-torn Indonesian town

MEDAN, Indonesia (AFP) — Soldiers were rushed to the western Indonesian city of Medan after a mob torched shops there Tuesday following a night of violence by protesters angered at fuel price rises, residents said.

A mob of more than 100 people set several shops in Sutrisno Street on fire and soldiers have been rushed to the area," a resident of the North Sumatra capital said.

The shops were mostly owned by ethnic Chinese, the resident said, adding that people found in the shops were beaten up, regardless of their race, before the buildings were set on fire.

Mobs also attacked two offices of the state electricity company PT PLN in east Medan, pelting the offices and the company's vehicles, a PLN official at another office in Medan said.

In Jakarta 17 students of the Mercu Buana private university were wounded by rubber-coated bullets as police tried to disperse

a protest by some 5,000 students against the fuel price rises and President Suharto's economic management.

Meanwhile earlier Tuesday hundreds of students at the city's Teachers' University, closed until May 7 following violent clashes with security forces

Monday, burned tyres in front of their campus, a WTN journalist who witnessed the incident said.

Security was tight at the site but security forces did not intervene, the journalist said, adding hundreds of onlookers cheered the students.

The unrest was sparked by a government announcement Monday of immediate fuel price increases of up to 71 per cent and a 60 per cent rise in electricity rates over the next six months.

This follows the elimination of subsidies in keeping with IMF-imposed conditions as part of an economic restructuring plan. The PLN official in Medan,

who declined to be named, said the mob was angered by the electricity price rise.

Another Medan resident said armoured vehicles and trucks filled with soldiers and police were roaming the city or guarding strategic locations.

"The atmosphere downtown is tense," the resident said. A mob of more than 1,000 was marching towards Pulau Brayan, an industrial area on the way to the port, she said.

The mob was yelling "scrap the fuel and electricity rise" and chanting anti-government slogans.

At least 13 vehicles including two security vehicles were burned as hundreds of people joined protesting students in a central shopping district of Medan Monday.

At least five people were injured by rubber-coated bullets while several others sustained bruises from police and military beatings, a witness said.

Probe of anti-Castro plot leads to powerful Cuban group

WASHINGTON (AFP) — An investigation into four Cuban exiles arrested in October in connection with a plot to kill President Fidel Castro

has led to the Cuban-American National Foundation, one of the most powerful lobbying groups in the United States, which advocates non-violent approaches to promote change in Cuba.

The foundation, which the daily said has raised more than \$1 million for both Republicans and Democrats, was created and chaired by Jorge Mas Canosa, who died last year from lung cancer.

A Federal Bureau of Investigation report into La Esperanza found that the sniper rifles were registered to Francisco Hernandez, president of the foundation; La Esperanza belonged to a company owned by Jose Antonio Llama, a member of the foundation's executive board; and the private dock from which the boat sailed belonged to another foundation member whose business partner is the group's treasurer, the daily said.

The subsequent investigation, government officials told the daily, has implicated the Cuban-American National Foundation, one of the most powerful lobbying groups in the United States, which advocates non-violent approaches to promote change in Cuba.

The foundation, which the daily said has raised more than \$1 million for both Republicans and Democrats, was created and chaired by Jorge Mas Canosa, who died last year from lung cancer.

A Federal Bureau of Investigation report into La Esperanza found that the sniper rifles were registered to Francisco Hernandez, president of the foundation; La Esperanza belonged to a company owned by Jose Antonio Llama, a member of the foundation's executive board; and the private dock from which the boat sailed belonged to another foundation member whose business partner is the group's treasurer, the daily said.

The subsequent investigation, government officials told the daily, has implicated the Cuban-American National Foundation, one of the most powerful lobbying groups in the United States, which advocates non-violent approaches to promote change in Cuba.

A spokesman for the foundation had no comment, the daily added.

If the federal investigation establishes that foundation leaders supported commando activities against Mr. Castro, the daily said, it would weaken the group's credibility on Capitol Hill and leave an opening for those who favour a less confrontational approach to Cuba.

Ricardo Pesquera, Mr. Alfonso's lawyer, told the daily that if his client were to be put on trial "we will go after the government ... for 30 years they tried to kill Mr. Castro and now they say others can't do the very same thing they were doing."

Mr. Alfonso and the other three Cuban exiles arrested in October were accused of weapons smuggling and making false statements. Charges of conspiracy to commit murder were dropped on insufficient evidence, but federal investigators expect they will be reinstated.

Niger students release their ambassador in Benin

COTONOU (AFP) — Students from Niger studying in Benin released their ambassador, Mahaman Bachir Zada, overnight after holding him at his office for several hours, a students' group told AFP Tuesday.

Monday, about 150 students from Niger at the National University of Benin, pressing demands for unpaid scholarships and fees, forced the ambassador to stay in his office.

They released him "given firm promises" made by the authorities in Niger, the General

Union of Niger Students in Cotonou (UGENIC) said.

The protesters are demanding payment of six months' worth of grants in arrears, as well as registration fees due to the Benin government totalling 248 million CFA francs (\$413,000).

Beijing starts official countdown for Macau handover

BEIJING (AFP) — China Tuesday unveiled a clock to show the world counting the seconds until the return of the former enclave of Macau in 1999, the next territory to be welcomed back into the fold after last year's Hong Kong handover.

Identical to the clock that marked the time passing to Hong Kong's return, the Macau timepiece graces the entrance to the Chinese Revolution History Museum in Tiananmen Square, where momentous events in Chinese history are duly recorded.

The huge red clock, marked with the five-star symbol used on the national flag, appeared on the same day China's handover preparatory committee was to hold its first meeting. Like its counterpart for the Hong Kong handover, the group is charged with organising the new government, legislative council and judiciary under Chinese rule. It will also prepare the Dec. 20, 1999, ceremony marking the return of Macau to Chinese sovereignty.

Sixty of the 100 members are from Macau, which keeps China safely within the bounds of an earlier promise that "no fewer than 50 per cent" of the members of the committee must be natives, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

How much dissent is to be allowed on the committee remains an open question, however.

"The committee will take into consideration whatever opinions there might be, so long as they are conducive to China's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Macau, to the implementation of the basic law and for the benefits of the Macau residents," pledged Wang Qiren.

Mr. Wang is the vice-chairman of the preparatory committee and director of the Xinhua news agency's Macau branch and his comments leave wide room for interpretation.

Hopes have been stirred recently that under Chinese rule, the island's government will make more progress stamping out violent crime than it has under Portuguese tutelage.

"In conflict ... in spite of all the violence, it's not going to last very long. I think that now that the government has taken action, everything will improve considerably," said gambling tycoon and preparatory committee member Stanley Ho at the clock ceremony. He added that he anticipates a smooth transition.

A frontrunner for the post of Macau's first post-colonial chief executive, Ho said he expects law and order to improve after the handover and complained that the current government was responsible for the organised crime problem, a Hong Kong newspaper reported.

Macau has been rocked by gang violence over the past 18 months as rival triad groups fight turf wars for control of lucrative gambling and prostitution rackets.

The Portuguese enclave's handback is to follow the same "one country, two systems" principle used for Hong Kong, under which Beijing guarantees an unchanged way of life and a high degree of autonomy for 50 years.

Beijing is hoping the successful application of the formula in Macau's case — following the smooth handover of Hong Kong — will tempt Taiwan into agreeing to reunification on a similar basis.

So far, however, Taiwan has shown no enthusiasm for the "one country, two systems" formula. Beijing has repeatedly offered it, but the overtures have been rejected by Taipei, which insists on political equality.

Imperial China ceded Macau — a peninsula and two small islands adjacent to southern Guangdong province — to Portugal in 1557.



Serb. Albanian killed in a shooting on Monday as a so-called full-scale war could erupt in the region.

Serb. Albanian killed in shooting

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — An ethnic Albanian was killed in a shooting on Monday as a so-called full-scale war could erupt in the region.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

The head of Japan's Foreign Ministry, Tomie Kiyama, Tuesday said military exchanges with the United States would be resumed, but in response to the possibility of Japan's being involved in the conflict.

Bill Gates pays record price for American painting

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Microsoft chairman Bill Gates has paid more than \$30 million for an oil painting by Winslow Homer, the highest price for an American painting.

The New York Times reported Tuesday.

The price is nearly three times the previous record paid for John Singer

Sargent's "Cashmere," which sold at Sotheby's for \$11.1 million, art experts familiar with Mr. Gates' transaction told the daily.

"Lost on the Grand Banks," described by the experts as the last major seascape by Homer, was bought by Mr. Gates at a recent private sale that was

shrouded in secrecy.

The painting was sold by John Spoor Broome, a businessman from southern California who bought it from his grandmother in the 1940s.

Neither Mr. Gates' art adviser, nor his public relations company or Mr. Broome would confirm the purchase, the daily said.

The painting was sold by John Spoor Broome, a businessman from southern California who bought it from his grandmother in the 1940s.

Neither Mr. Gates' art adviser, nor his public relations company or Mr. Broome would confirm the purchase, the daily said.

The painting was sold by John Spoor Broome, a businessman from southern California who bought it from his grandmother in the 1940s.

Neither Mr. Gates' art adviser, nor his public relations company or Mr. Broome would confirm the purchase, the daily said.

The painting was sold by John Spoor Broome, a businessman from southern California who bought it from his grandmother in the 1940s.



Serbian policemen take cover after unidentified gunmen opened fire during a police investigation on a murder case near the village of Glogovac Tuesday. Fighting raged for a second day in Kosovo on Monday as a senior official from neighbouring Albania warned that full-scale war could erupt in the restive Serbian province (Reuters photo)

Serb, Albanian killed in Kosovo

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — An ethnic Albanian was killed in Kosovo Tuesday and the body of a dead Serbian was discovered by police, the Serbian media centre in the provincial capital Pristina reported.

Nazif Basbot, an Albanian, was killed early Tuesday in an armed attack by unknown gunmen on his family house in the village Bobovac, near Klinja, some 80 kilometres from Pristina, the centre said, quoting police sources.

Also Tuesday morning, police discovered

the body of Nenad Jaredic, a postal worker, who was shot dead, the centre said.

Jaredic, from the village of Josanica near Klinja, was last seen leaving his village Monday for nearby Dobra Voda where he worked.

More than 100 people, most of them ethnic Albanians, have been killed since March when clashes erupted between Serbian security forces and armed Albanian separatists in Kosovo.

Japanese defence chief calls for closer military ties with China

BEIJING (AFP) — The head of Japan's Defence Agency, Fumio Kiyama, Tuesday called for more military exchanges with China and played down the possibility of Japanese forces getting involved in any conflict over Taiwan.

Japan is prepared to expand defence exchanges with China, the official Xinhua news agency quoted him as saying in an address to the Chinese army's University of National Defence.

Mr. Kiyama, the agency's director general, said he hoped to see mutual visits by warships from the two sides within the year.

He was due to wind up his four-day tour of China later in the day.

He also gave assurances that last week's moves to tighten Japan's defence cooperation with the United States were no threat to China.

Washington and Tokyo on April 28 signed an agreement under which Japan could supply U.S. troops with non-lethal provisions in "areas surrounding Japan" in situations where Japan's peace and prosperity are affected.

At the same time the Tokyo government approved three bills that would legalise such support.

The possibility that the moves would apply to conflict in the Taiwan Strait has drawn fire from Beijing. But in response to a question, Mr. Kiyama reportedly said the guidelines were not based on a geographical concept and neither included nor

excluded a given area.

Japan fully recognises Beijing's sovereignty over Taiwan, he added.

Defence Minister Chi Haotian gave Mr. Kiyama a stern lecture on the topic during their Sunday meeting.

The Taiwan issue is China's domestic

affair, he said, warning that attempts to include the Taiwan Strait in the sphere of the guidelines would violate China's sovereignty and would be "totally unacceptable to the Chinese government, people and armed forces."

While Japan routinely insists the guidelines are not aimed at any third country, a cabinet official caused a furore last year by admitting that conflict in the Taiwan Strait was a contingency that could, in theory, bring the guidelines into play.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Kiyama met Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan for a "frank and sincere" exchange of views on relations and other international issues, Xinhua said, without providing other details.

Premier Zhu Rongji told him Monday that the expected visit to Japan by Chinese President Jiang Zemin this autumn would open a "new phase" in relations. The peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region depends on strengthening ties, Mr. Zhu said.

Mr. Kiyama's visit is the first to China by a Tokyo defence chief in 11 years. He arrived in Shanghai Friday and made a one-day stop in the central city of Xian before travelling to the capital.

Seven dead, seven missing after floods in Tanzania

DAR ES SALAAM (AFP) — Seven people have drowned and seven others are missing, feared dead, following a weekend of torrential rains in the Tanzanian capital, police said Tuesday.

Dar es Salaam regional Police Commander Alfred Geve told AFP that the seven missing people were believed to have drowned in flood water. Five other people died in the floods last week.

Mr. Geve said more than 700 families had been made homeless after their houses were either destroyed by floods or submerged.

The homeless are mainly slum dwellers who put up shelters in low-lying areas of the city. People in the worst-affected areas have been pulling down their corrugated iron shacks and relocating to drier areas.

Several industries and warehouses have also been affected by the floods and a number of schools remained closed Monday and Tuesday after classrooms were flooded.

The heavy seasonal rains have also destroyed roads and seven bridges in the city, cutting off some city suburbs.

Road links between Dar es Salaam and the tourist resort town of Bagamoyo, some 100 kilometres north of here, have also been cut off after a bridge collapsed.

Busy U.N. court opens second trial chamber

THE HAGUE (AP) — The Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal opened its second courtroom Tuesday as it strives to cut the growing backlog of pending trials.

"This courtroom will enable the tribunal to operate two lots of double shifts to meet the increasing demands," British Attorney General John Morris said at a low-key ceremony where he cut a U.N. blue ribbon to officially open the courtroom.

Prime Minister Tony Blair's government donated \$500,000 to fund the building work. A third courtroom, funded by the U.S. and Dutch governments, is expected to open early next month.

Tribunal President Gabrielle Kirk McDonald of the United States said she was confident the United Nations would also approve a request for three more judges to help the 11-judge court.

The U.N. court currently has 26 suspects in custody and four trials going on simultaneously.

Suspects who have turned themselves in or been arrested by NATO forces face long waits before they are tried.

There may also be more work coming. Deputy Prosecutor Graham Blewitt said the tribunal has "determined to commence investigations into the recent events in Kosovo," where more than 150 people were killed in a Serb crackdown several months ago.

Ethnic Albanians make up 90 per cent of the population in Kosovo, where fighting has escalated in recent months. Many ethnic Albanians want independence from Serbia, the largest of two republics remaining in Yugoslavia.

Mr. Blewitt said investigators will "continue to monitor what is happening" in the troubled Yugoslav province, but refused to give any further details of the investigation.

Set up in 1993 to prosecute atrocities committed during the violent breakup of the former Yugoslavia, the court has so far convicted just two war criminals out of 74 suspects publicly indicted.

Its most-wanted suspects, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his wartime military chief General Ratko Mladic, are still at large.

Asked if he knew when they would appear in the Hague, Mr. Blewitt said: "I am confident that sooner or later all of the indicted accused will appear before this tribunal either because they are arrested or they surrender voluntarily."

Cambodian troops said to be winning against Khmer Rouge remnants

BANGKOK (AFP) — Phnom Penh's troops have the upper hand against the remnants of Khmer Rouge forces fighting a desperate battle for survival in northern Cambodia, Thai military sources said Tuesday.

Thai officers at the border just a few hundred meters from a guerrilla outpost said fighting was heavy for control of strategic Hill 200.

"The fighting is very close to the border but the Khmer Rouge still control the area," a Thai officer told AFP from a border command post. "But the Phnom Penh troops seem to be taking the advantage because they're slowly pushing the battlefield back."

Military monitors said they could hear frequent firefights involving small arms and machine guns, interspersed with artillery

and tank barrages mostly from the government side. Earlier reports said the hill had fallen and the guerrillas had retreated to positions even closer to the border.

A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees official in Bangkok said up to 17,000 dependants of Khmer Rouge rebels had crossed into Thailand to flee the fighting.

Reports in the Thai press had said that up to 32,000 people were in two makeshift camps, about eight kilometres from the border in Thailand's Si Sa Ket province.

"The local authorities expect a total of 15,000 to 17,000 only. The reports of 25,000 to 30,000 were too high," the official said. "I think the figure (52,000), as far as we know, is ridiculous."

Thai military officers denied that some of the refugees who crossed into Thailand last week were active Khmer Rouge soldiers who had returned in Cambodia to continue fighting.

Khmer Rouge rebels led by one-legged military leader Ta Mok fled to the hill after their former stronghold at Anlong Veng, 16 kilometres south of the border with Thailand, was overrun by government soldiers in March.

The whereabouts of Ta Mok and other Khmer Rouge leaders are unknown and Thai military sources said they had no comment on rumours that there had been a split at the top of the once-feared rebel army, which presided over Cambodia's 1975-1979 "killing fields" genocide.

Some reports have said Ta Mok had fled to the Thailand-Cambodia-Lao border to the northeast, while political leader Khieu Samphan and senior ideologue Nuon Chea were trying to link with Cambodian resistance forces loyal to deposed First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Khmer Rouge radio monitored here said more than 20 government troops had been killed by mines and rocket-grenade fire Monday, with scores more injured. The radio said Phnom Penh seemed "intent on further feeding the fires of war by launching operations to destroy completely the resistance forces."

"They have also combined their forces from Siem Reap, Kompong Thom and Battambang to send them to certain death

at the frontlines," the radio added, saying the battle was still for control of Anlong Veng.

It said the Khmer Rouge could "cooperate with other national forces" in end the war and bring national reconciliation. Cambodian resistance army commander Nhiek Bun Chhay has said he is waiting for Prince Ranariddh's approval before he will accept Khmer Rouge defectors into his army based at the village of O Smach, along the border to the west of Anlong Veng.

Thousands of Khmer Rouge have in recent weeks defected to the Phnom Penh army controlled by Prince Ranariddh's rival, Second Prime Minister Hun Sen, and have led the attack on their former Khmer Rouge comrades.

Key minister defends French role at probe on Rwanda genocide

PARIS (AFP) — Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine stepped in Tuesday to defend the role of late President François Mitterrand in events before and after the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

Mr. Vedrine, who was Mitterrand's chief of staff between 1991 and 1995, was testifying before a parliamentary commission probing policy in Rwanda, the first such inquiry set up in more than three decades to examine the country's foreign policy conduct.

The foreign minister, the first acting cabinet minister to be heard by the commission, denied that France for years had backed the Hutu extremists responsible for four months of bloody ethnic killings in 1994 in which up to 800,000 people died, mostly minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

The thrust of Mitterrand's Africa policy throughout his 14 years at the helm was to help African nations linked to France ensure security and protect their borders — through defence arrangements with Paris — while bolstering economic development and shoring up democracy, he said.

When Tutsi rebels staged a military offensive in the 1990s to bring down the regime of the late Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana, France offered military cooperation "to ensure stability and stop a chain reaction that would destabilise the region," he said.

Likewise, France throughout the Mitterrand years "did not back Habyarimana but instead relentlessly pressured him to share power" with the Tutsi minority and install truly democratic institutions, Mr. Vedrine stressed.

The commission, which is to hear some 60 people during its three to four months of hearings, was set up in March to investigate whether France supplied weaponry or political backing for Hutu extremists in Rwanda held responsible for the 1994 genocide.

At the centre of concern are allegations that France backed and armed the Hutu regime regardless of rights abuses up to 1994 and supplied training and weaponry even after the beginning of the genocide in April 1994, to the murderous Hutu army and militia.

New Caledonians hail start of new era of peace

NOUMEA (AFP) — Independence fighters and pro-France loyalists Tuesday signed an accord with French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin on the future of New Caledonia, launching a new era of peace for the French Pacific territory.

Mr. Jospin, who flew to the far-flung territory on a special 36-hour mission to sign the agreement, renewed "the government's commitment to ensure that the accord is applied totally and loyally both to the letter and its spirit."

The agreement struck on April 21 after two months of tough talks in both Paris and Noumea sets out a step-by-step devolution of powers to the New Caledonian authorities.

By the end of the year, the 200,000 residents will vote on whether the island should have its own government with enlarged powers. A referendum on full independence from France, which annexed the territory in 1953, will be held in 15 to 20 years time.

The accord includes references to the suffering of the indigenous Kanak people under French rule.

Mr. Jospin pledged at Tuesday's ceremony that draft changes to the French constitution which will be

needed to implement the accord would go before the cabinet at the end of May or beginning of June. He hoped it would be voted on by mid-July.

It is hoped the accord will end decades of tension between indigenous Melanesian Kanak people and the French and other settlers who, though in the minority, held economic and political sway.

Although Mr. Jospin steered clear of using the word "independence," with both sides still fiercely opposed over the issue, he said "the irreversibility of sharing sovereignty is an integral part of the accord."

But the head of the separatist Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), Roch Wamyman, said: "We have begun to build independence from today."

He hailed the accord as a solution well adapted to New Caledonia's particular situation, which would allow the country "to evolve politically."

His rival Jacques Lafleur, the leader of the loyalist Rally for Caledonia in the Republic (RPCR), acknowledged that "each side had made often painful concessions" to reach the accord but said it "did not represent

any renunciation of their deep convictions."

The agreement was "a sincere expression of a desire to live and build together" a New Caledonia in which "the Melanesians can occupy their rightful place."

His party is hoping that the eventual referendum will lead to the nickel-rich island staying within the French republic.

The talks to settle the future of the islands about 1,500 kilometres east of Australia stemmed from a 1988 agreement, known as the Matignon accord, that ended years of simmering unrest and violence.

Since 1975, when Kanak separatists launched a campaign for independence, France has faced more trouble in New Caledonia than in any of its other 10 possessions.

Former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard, who signed the Matignon accord 10 years ago, was one of the first to applaud Tuesday's ceremony.

"It is the first time in history that the gradual conquest of sovereignty has been organised," he said, adding Noumea would "become a symbol of peace."

Mr. Jospin said there was much interest in the new

accord, adding that he had received congratulations from British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

But he acknowledged that there were still many issues to be settled.

"Young people are wondering and asking us with a growing insistence what will change in their daily lives, what future we are preparing for them."

"The success of the Noumea accord will be judged on the quality and strength of the replies which are given to these questions."

Earlier, Mr. Jospin paid a personal tribute to a slain New Caledonian separatist leader, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, killed by a radical separatist for signing the Matignon accord 10 years ago.

Mr. Jospin went to his grave in his tribal village of Tiendanite in a remote valley around 300 kilometres northeast of Noumea.

"By signing these accords 10 years after the Matignon accords we are prolonging Tjibaou's message of peace," he said.

The so-called Noumea accord was signed by Mr. Jospin and Secretary of State for Overseas Territories Jean-Jack Queyranne as well as Mr. Wamyman and Mr. Lafleur.

Nigerian junta to meet after death sentences

LAGOS (AFP) — The Nigerian junta's Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) will meet Tuesday, press reports said, a week after a special military court sentenced to death six people convicted of a coup plot.

The pro-government Daily Times said the PRC was due to ratify the sentences handed down on April 28 by the tribunal, which ruled after a secret hearing that six people should be executed and 10 others jailed.

Officials would not confirm that the top-level meeting of General Sani Abacha's junta was scheduled, but the PRC has the final say on upholding or annulling the court judgements, which are otherwise without appeal.

The court at Jos in central Nigeria condemned five soldiers to death, including Gen. Abacha's former number two General Oladipo Diya, with one civilian, and banded down four life prison terms and six other jail sentences, while acquitting other suspects.

The death sentences on people convicted of treason for plotting a coup which the junta said it had foiled in December have brought calls for clemency from

several foreign governments and within Nigeria itself.

The PRC is an exclusively military body whose decisions are carried out without appeal.

Some observers have noted that calls for mercy have been more muted than the international outcry which led to the commuting of death sentences against other convicted plotters, including former head of state General Olesegun Obasanjo, held to have planned a coup in 1993.

Gen. Obasanjo was the only military ruler ever to hand over power willingly to civilians in Nigeria.

Gen. Abacha has stated that he will do so on Oct. 1, but his transition programme involves five parties all authorised and funded by the regime and has been dismissed by the opposition as merely a series of manoeuvres to perpetuate the rule of his clique.

On April 30, Gen. Abacha convened a meeting of the military administrators of Nigeria's 36 states, a consultative move which he has generally taken in the past before forging ahead with crucial policy decisions by the junta.

Differences narrow over cost-sharing for N. Korea nuclear reactors

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea's economic crisis has helped narrow differences with the United States and Japan over sharing the cost of new nuclear reactors for North Korea, officials said Tuesday.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has reportedly said Washington would consider contributing to the cost of building the light water reactors if South Korea shared the U.S. burden of providing the North with crude oil.

She made the proposal last Friday in talks with South Korean counterpart Park Jung-Soo, a foreign ministry official was quoted by Yonhap News Agency as saying.

"We have agreed to pay 70 per cent (of the reactors) only if the United States arranges for the remaining 30 per cent," the foreign ministry official was quoted as saying.

The cost of building the two new reactors, to replace old ones suspected of producing plutonium for nuclear weapons, was calculated in won before the Korean currency's decline.

The official said the cost would come down from the equivalent of \$5.2 billion to between \$4.0 and \$4.2 billion should the exchange rate be adjusted from the initially agreed 925 won per dollar to between 1,100 won and 1,200 won.

Japan has proposed that if the new exchange rate is applied, it will increase its contribution from 100 billion yen, or \$800 million at the 1997 rate, to \$1

billion, Mrs. Albright told Mr. Park.

This would increase Japan's share to more than 20 per cent of the total construction cost while the United States would chip in less than 10 per cent. South Korea has agreed to offer 70 per cent, the ministry official said.

The light water reactors are at the centre of a 1994 agreement, in which North Korea agreed with the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency to suspend its nuclear programme. There were suspicions that plutonium produced by this programme was being diverted to make nuclear weapons.

In return KEDO, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation, is pledged to supply 500,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil annually to North Korea as well as finance the building of the two 1,000-megawatt light water reactors, which produce less plutonium.

KEDO is led by South Korea, the United States and Japan. A U.S. official has said Washington is worried that North Korea might pull out of the agreement and reactivate its nuclear programme in the absence of a definite accord on cost-sharing and because of delays in providing crude oil as replacement fuel.

The United States was looking for new sources of finance, having already approached the European Union.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab print daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.
 جوردن تايمز: صحيفة عربية مستقلة منشورة بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
 ABDUL SALAM TARAWNEH

Vice Chairman & Director General:
 MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
 GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
 University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
 Telephone: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585
 Facsimile: 5696183

E-mail: jtimes@go.com.jo

Web Sites: http://accessme.com/JordanTimes/

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Hope for U.S. talks

FEW COUNTRIES in the world care more deeply about the fate of next week's talks in Washington between Israel and the Palestinians. We hope that the new round will succeed where the London talks could not achieve a breakthrough.

So much is at stake on the political, economic and social levels, that, as His Majesty King Hussein pointed out on so many occasions, Jordan would be the first to suffer from the continued impasse in the peace process.

While the stalemate on the Palestinian-Israeli track becomes more and more acute, Jordanians are approaching a delicate phase of the economic restructuring programme, with the privatisation process set to gain momentum in a few months and creating fears of massive lay offs.

With these developments in mind, it is more important than ever that all political forces in the Kingdom unite to face the impending challenge.

Under the circumstances, an era of reconciliation between the government and opposition would ease tension and create consensus on the major issues facing the Kingdom.

To consolidate the country's achievements at the economic and political levels, issues such as the elections, the press law and a privatisation bill need to be debated and refined in a manner that would address the concerns of all.

The new laws that will take Jordan into the next century should be the product of a national consensus, as was the National Charter which paved the way for the democratisation process.

"Let us leave the past behind, and look to the present and the future," the King said this week, in a clear message addressed to both the government and the opposition.

"Let us identify the pitfalls and find out what people are blaming us for. Let us find out what the points of weakness are and how we can remedy them."

Political activists see in these words and in the King's acceptance of an invitation to meet with the presidents of the professional unions a signal of fresh determination to bring the government and opposition back to a constructive and fruitful dialogue.

In the national interest, both the government and the opposition must heed the King's call and sit together and listen to each other, after many months of estrangement.

The time has come for the opposition to be more pragmatic and to abandon slogans for the sake of real and obtainable goals. A mature opposition does not oppose government policies tout court.

The government, meanwhile, should treat the opposition as a partner and deal with it in good faith and complete openness.

For Jordan to continue to be an oasis of security and stability, all forces that have contributed to its well being and progress must continue to work with a unity of purpose.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Rai's Fahed Fanek urged Lebanon to accept Israel's offer to withdraw its troops from southern Lebanon. The writer said that while recognising the fact that the Israelis have offered to withdraw as a result of their losses in southern Lebanon at the hands of the Lebanese resistance, it is difficult to understand Lebanon's refusal to see Israel withdrawing from occupied Lebanese territory. He said, according to U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, Israel has to withdraw from southern Lebanon, and the Beirut government is duty bound to allow the Israelis to withdraw and recover their usurped territory especially as Israel is not demanding a peace treaty with Lebanon in exchange for its withdrawal. The writer said there is no logic in linking the occupied Syrian territories with southern Lebanese territories particularly as withdrawal from southern Lebanon is governed by Resolution 425 in exchange for nothing while Resolution 242 on the withdrawal from Syrian territory is linked to exchanging land for peace.

Al Aswaq's Rashid Hassan bailed a decision by the minister of administrative development to organise a national conference to discuss the problem of unemployment saying that the meeting would tackle one of the most important issues facing the Jordanian society. Calling on the public and private organisations in Jordan to back the idea, the writer said it is incumbent on all the universities, professional unions, chambers of commerce and industry as well as other institutions to help make this conference a success through ample preparations and in-depth studies to be submitted to the participants. The writer said unemployment has been irking the whole society as it has direct impact on every Jordanian family and therefore everything possible should be done to deal with this chronic issue because addressing unemployment means helping to end poverty in Jordan.

Washington Watch

U.S. press treatment of Israel at 50

AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS of the Arab-Israeli conflict were shaped by myth and prejudice. As described by one of Zionism's founders, Chaim Weizmann in a 1930s appeal to supporters in the United States, the parties to the conflict in Palestine were:

On the one side [the Arabs] the forces of destruction, the forces of the desert... and on the other side [the Zionists] standing firm are the forces of civilisation and building. It is the old war of the desert against civilisation.

This stark and racist equation found no better expression than it did in the 1950s film The Exodus, which defined for generations of Americans their images of Arabs and Jews. The Jews of The Exodus were survivors of an infamous tragedy. But more than that they were industrious and visionary pioneers who sought only to create a homeland where they and their children could find freedom. They were artists and musicians. They were brave and passionate soldiers.

The Arabs of The Exodus, on the other hand, were objectified as evil lacking in human virtue. They were backward and liars. And they were cowards. Millions read the book on which the film was based. The film itself was seen by tens of millions. And the theme song from the movie became, for many years, one of America's most popular tunes.

Actually this entire Zionist effort was not only insidious, it was also quite clever. From the beginning this movement had identified itself as a Western colonial enterprise. Zionists portrayed themselves, in Hertz's words as "a rampart of Europe against Asia... an outpost of civilisation against barbarism."

In the United States they defined their conquest in terms Americans would understand. They, the Zionists, depicted themselves as the pioneers and cowboys, and the Arabs, as the Indians.

In the end, the Zionists won not only on the battlefield in Palestine, they also won the cultural battle in the United States to define the images through which Americans would understand this conflict.

In the face of this cultural onslaught the Arabs stood defenceless. Jews had made their story into a centrepiece of popular culture. While the Arabs told the story of their tragedy to no one except themselves.

It was not that the Arabs had no story to tell, no powerful images to evoke. They simply did not enter the marketplace of ideas in the West. And when they did, they did so clumsily and artlessly.

For more than half a century we have lived through this

onslaught — this typecasting of Israelis as good and Arabs as evil — of Israelis as humans "just like Americans" and Arabs as a faceless enemy. We have struggled to define ourselves against overwhelming odds and relentless campaigns. Arabs portrayed as bloodthirsty terrorists, Arabs depicted as wealthy and unworthy possessors of petrodollars. Through it all Arab humanity was denied and our accomplishments and aspirations ignored.

But despite these campaigns against us and despite our failure to wage an effective and intelligent cultural campaign in the West, nevertheless the struggle of our people is beginning to break through the stereotypes.

In this context it is especially interesting to note the rather significant and, to some extent, surprising U.S. press treatment of Israel's 50th anniversary. Virtually every major U.S. newspaper has devoted a series of articles to this event and almost without exception the coverage has been thoughtful and balanced. For example, The Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, and USA Today have all run a number of pieces examining the 50 years from a variety of perspectives, with almost all of them focusing on the unfinished issues of peace and justice for the Palestinians.

Of special note has been the coverage given by the New York Times, clearly the United States' most influential newspaper. Thus far the Times has devoted seven separate full page articles to this series, all under the heading "Israel at 50."

The first in the series was entitled "Many Voices, not All in Unison in Today's Israel," featured interviews with six different Israelis. Featured prominently among the six was an Israeli Arab who described the discrimination she had endured as an Israeli "second class citizen."

Next came a fascinating examination of the outcry created in Israel over a TV series that included a segment on the Palestinian national movement. The piece called "Israel's History, Viewed Candidly, Stirs a Storm" discussed the "new historians" of Israel who are for the first time publishing accounts of "the expulsions (of 1948)... the killings of Arab civilians in border skirmishes and missed opportunities to negotiate with the Arabs."

The third in the New York Times series focused on economic matters and discussed Israel's evolution into a capitalist hi-tech oriented economy.

But it was the fourth piece that has been the most interesting. Entitled "Living with the Palestinian 'Catastrophe'" the full-page article documents the history

of the Shikaki family. (The article was reprinted in the Jordan Times on April 25 on page 7.) It begins with their expulsion from their village in 1948 (and reports on its subsequent destruction) and notes "the Shikakis" farmed this land for generations, if not centuries, cultivating wheat, apricots, oranges and cucumbers... (after) May of 1948 they fled... and were never permitted back. Their house was demolished and their land given to the Jews."

The article then goes on to sympathetically describe the different paths taken by each of the Shikaki children. Fathi, the founder of Islamic Jihad, Khalil, the Director of the Centre for Palestine Research and Studies, and Abdul Aziz, a pharmaceutical businessman.

The next article in the series presents the results of a New York Times poll on Israel entitled "For Better or Worse, Israel is Special in U.S. Eyes," while the sixth article was entitled "Jews and Arabs, Painting a Mural Together. Find a Mosaic of Distrust." This article describes the tensions that developed among three artists — an Israeli Jew, an Israeli Arab, and a West Bank Palestinian — as they worked together to create an artistic representation of their conflict.

This final piece in the series was a balanced treatment of the actual celebration on Israel's anniversary, including the demonstrations by rightists and peace activists at Jabal Abu Ghneim and a separate long article on Palestinian reactions to the day during which they mourn for their loss.

What has been exceptionally evident in the Times series and most of the other press treatments of the 50th anniversary is the extent to which Arab voices and Arab stories have figured prominently in the accounts.

Despite Zionism's fervent efforts to deny the Arab human component to the conflict in Palestine, 50 years later it continues to weigh heavily on their story. As it is, notwithstanding Zionism's military conquest and its cultural onslaught this movement has been unable to erase Arab humanity from the equation in Palestine. The Palestinian demand for justice remains a significant issue that will not go away. And Palestinian voices continue to factor prominently throughout the U.S. press stories written about "Israel at 50." In the end, the exclusionary myth could not totally conquer. Palestinians remain and must be dealt with as equals and their aspirations respected.

Israel cannot commemorate its anniversary even in the United States without being reminded of its past. And it will not know peace until the injustices of that past have been restored.

Press crackdown confusion

By Steve Negus

CAIRO — The Egyptian government has a strange way of confusing itself with its own rhetoric. Citing the need to protect officials and businessmen from slander and calumny, the state has declared its readiness to stamp the so-called "yellow press" out of existence, with the state-owned (and indeed some of the opposition) press cheering them on.

But now that they are ready to make the decrees and take the international criticism, the government seems to be floundering in its attempts to define what the "yellow press" might be and is striking out at random. On March 31, printing houses in the Nasser City Free Zone were unexpectedly told by the Investment Authority that they would no longer be allowed to print newspapers or magazines, in any language, of any type. The free zone is a printing house of choice for what the papers have dubbed the "Cyprus phenomenon," periodicals unable to obtain an Egyptian printing licence but legally registered in Cyprus.

But none of the approximately 60 periodicals that print in Nasser City constitute what is normally referred to as the "yellow press" — fly-by-night rags with minimal circulation that survive on bribes and blackmail. The only ones that could possibly be considered even controversial are the English-language Cairo Times (where this correspondent is employed), Egypt Today, Middle East Times or Business Monthly, all of which are subject to the foreign publications censor any way. The vast majority, however, are things like Satellite Guide, Dining Guide, Huwa wa Hiya (Him and Her, for teenagers), Dikor (interior decorating), or Shams (gardening).

The irony of all this, however, is that most of these papers can go and print elsewhere in the region — a Lebanese printer is already in town scouting for business. The only ones who will really lose out are the Free Zone's two Egyptian-owned print shops and their 250-odd employees.

Lacking from the whole picture is any sense of why the government issued this decree at all. The order clearly came from the top. The two obvious suspects — free zone authority head Ibrahim Fawzi and Information Minister Safwat Al Sbari, who normally keeps the press in check — have both privately told publishers that they had nothing to do

with it. This leaves Prime Minister Kamal Al Ganzuri or, more likely, President Hosni Mubarak himself. It is possible, but unlikely, that the president so much wanted to shut down the English-language publications that he did not mind sacrificing all the rest alongside them. It is far more likely, however, that he did not know one from the other and simply confused (or was deliberately misled into confusing) the "Cyprus phenomenon" and the "yellow press," terms which the press has been using interchangeably, and ordered the free zone closed without looking further into the matter.

Before the Luxor massacre, one could say that Mubarak was not at all the type to make sloppy decisions. But in the four months since Luxor Egypt has witnessed his snap decision to fire the interior minister (not that anyone questions its ultimate wisdom, but it was sudden), then his February baranguing of businessmen, then his decision to shut down Al Dustur, then this. This trend, more than anything else, is reason for concern about Egypt's future.

— Middle East International

LETTERS

Germans omitted

To the editor:

WE ARE disappointed, that the "Jordan Times" report on the COPEX Fair in Amman (April 29) did not mention Germany as being among the exhibitors at the "COPEX Fair." Together there have been over five German companies at "COPEX." No other foreign country had as many exhibitors.

We rely on the traditional friendship between our two countries to express our disappointment.

Manfred Köhler
 German General Agency
 Amman

Origins and charges

To the editor:

I WOULD like to point out a few mistakes in the article with regards to Internet Relay Chat published in the Jordan Times on Thursday, April 23.

1. Khaled Mardam-Bey is not Egyptian. He is of Syrian origin.

2. The concept is called IRC, however, the actual software Khaled developed is called mIRC.

3. The writer was correct in saying that Khaled at first released the software free of charge, however, but for him to be able to continue to develop the programme, he began to charge an optional registration fee of \$20 not \$11 as stated in the article. The charge is still optional and any contribution, however large or small, is very much appreciated by Khaled.

Karim Mardam-Bey
 Amman

Features

Nizar Kabbani

of freedom

By Peter Clarke

WITH THE death of Nizar Kabbani, at the age of 75, the Arab World has lost one of its most popular poets, one who expressed in simple but soaring language the aspirations, the language, anger and visions of millions of Arabs. In particular, Kabbani's work explored the human condition and the desire for love and freedom, especially as experienced by women.

Kabbani was born in Damascus to a gifted and comfortable family. He was a poet, a writer, a journalist, a translator, a publisher, a teacher, a father, a grandfather, a friend, a lover, a man who lived a full life. He was a man who was deeply affected when he was a teenager by the suicide of his sister, Wisal. He was a man who was unable to love a woman who loved him. He was a man who was a poet, a writer, a journalist, a publisher, a teacher, a father, a grandfather, a friend, a lover, a man who lived a full life.

Kabbani wrote poetry from a very young age. While still a very young man, he published his first poem in a magazine. He was a man who was a poet, a writer, a journalist, a publisher, a teacher, a father, a grandfather, a friend, a lover, a man who lived a full life.

Kabbani was a man who was a poet, a writer, a journalist, a publisher, a teacher, a father, a grandfather, a friend, a lover, a man who lived a full life. He was a man who was a poet, a writer, a journalist, a publisher, a teacher, a father, a grandfather, a friend, a lover, a man who lived a full life.

His view

that society

national

liberation

meaning

without

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

liberation

Jordan and Israel agree on measures to implement provisions of QIZ accord

AMMAN (Petra) — The joint Jordanian-Israeli committee Tuesday agreed on the necessary administrative and technical measures to start implementing provisions of the accord concluded between both countries concerning the Qualifying Industrial Zone (QIZ).

Samir Omeish, the head of the Jordanian side to the meetings, said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that a team from the Ministry of Industry and Trade will meet next Saturday with investors at the Al Hassan Industrial Estate to explain the measures that must be taken by manufacturers to qualify their products for free entry into the U.S. markets.

The Jordanian side has prepared all the qualifying documents and will help investors fill in the applications to make sure that they meet the requirements of the QIZ agreement between Jordan and Israel and the U.S. customs authorities.

Under the agreement, each Jordanian and Israeli manufacturer should contribute and maintain at least one third of the minimum 35 per cent content required under the proclamation for duty free treatment in the U.S.

According to officials, the remaining one third of the 35 per cent requirement could come from the QIZ, or from manufacturers in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Gaza, Israel or the U.S.

OPEC likely to cut output again

PARIS (AFP) — Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) will almost certainly have to announce further cuts in oil output when ministers meet in June, as cuts which took effect a month ago have had little success in boosting prices, analysts say.

Oil prices fell in London on Tuesday after a proposed meeting between Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and non-OPEC member Mexico at the weekend failed to materialise, and in mid-afternoon trading Brent crude for June delivery was quoted at \$14.80 a barrel, down 33 cents from Friday's close of \$15.13.

The three countries brokered a deal in late March to cut output, resulting in an agreement by OPEC members to cut output by 1.245 million barrels a day, or some 4.3 per cent of total production, until the end of the year.

OPEC members have largely respected this commitment, but "it obviously has not been enough to push prices higher," said Peter Bogin of Cambridge Energy Research Associates.

Prices had fallen to \$11 a barrel before the March meeting, but were trading at close to \$14.50 when it became clear the cuts would be made.

Current prices are above that level, but still far from the almost \$19 a barrel in November when OPEC decided to lift its output ceiling by 10 per cent to \$27.5 million a barrel.

A number of OPEC members are already talking about a further cut in output at the next ministerial meeting on June 24, with Iran, Kuwait, Qatar and Libya all supporting the idea, while Venezuela has suggested a 500,000 barrel a day reduction.

The problem is that the market is now expecting a further cut, and if it fails to materialise, there could be "a very strong negative reaction due to market disappointment," Mr. Bogin said.

To make matters worse, there is no sign of an imminent turnaround in crisis-hit Asian countries to lift oil demand, as some had hoped.

"It appears the slowdown in the Far East is worse than had been expected," said

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21-April 19) — Continue to demonstrate what a good worker you are. People in authority are watching, with a promotion in mind. You are gaining valuable experience and possibly a bit of revenue, too. And it looks like you have already thought of ways to spend it.

TAURUS: (April 20-May 20) — There is a controversy, and you are stuck right in the middle. Both combatants are trying to talk you on to their side, but you do not feel that either deserves your full support. You are right. Instead of choosing one over the other, be the referee. In this situation, calmer heads should prevail.

GEMINI: (May 21-June 21) — What would it take to get your house just the way you want it? You probably have a long list, with reasons why each improvement can't happen yet. Well, one of them could. Through private negotiations or a trade, you could get something you need at a surprisingly low cost.

CANCER: (June 22-July 22) — You are smarter than usual, and you seem to have an increased capacity to retain information. It is as if you added another gigabyte or two to your memory bank. This is only a temporary condition, however. Take full advantage of it while you have it.

LEO: (July 23-August 22) — An older person can be talked into increasing your income, but you will have to have the facts at your fingertips. If you can show a graph that illustrates how you have increased the company's revenue, you will score. Otherwise, just do the best you can with what you have got.

VIRGO: (August 23-September 22) — Don't be critical of a partner first thing this morning. He or she is actually on to something, even though the methods are quite different than what you had in mind. Don't judge this person on procedures. Just judge the results.

LIBRA: (September 23-October 23) — There is more new stuff coming in than you expected. Some of the old will just have to wait a while longer. You may have been feeling stretched a little thin lately. Don't worry. Tomorrow the moon will be in your sign and you will be recharged.

SCORPIO: (October 24-November 21) — Everybody wants your time and attention. You will be racing from one engagement to another, with barely time to catch your breath. If you can get your friends together in one place tonight, you won't have so much running around to do. That will increase your fun exponentially.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22-December 21) — Perfection is again required. There is no point arguing. You will be much more successful if you go along with the programme. In fact, if you want to be really successful, you will master the programme now, even if it does not make any sense at all. It will, later.

CAPRICORN: (December 22-January 19) — Finish up projects you started over the last few days. It is not a good idea to start new ones now. You have probably been generating all sorts of ideas over the last few days, and that is good. Now you need to sort through and keep the ones that look like they will actually work.

AQUARIUS: (January 20-February 18) — You could generate some income by selling an idea. Have you ever considered teaching a class? You could be a tutor, or you could just start giving lessons to your neighbours and close relations. Start by finding out how much others charge.

PISCES: (February 19-March 20) — You and a partner seem to be headed in two different directions this morning. If this is someone you have hired, such as an attorney, make sure he or she knows what you want before proceeding further. If he is an accountant, you would better follow his advice.

IMF urges Egypt to reduce tariffs

CAIRO (AFP) — A senior International Monetary Fund (IMF) official on Tuesday urged Egypt to reduce tariffs to help promote its exports and said the country's economy was still growing too slowly.

"Exports need imports and need a free flow of trade, and without further progress on reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, the potential for raising export growth is undermined," Howard Handy said in a statement to reporters.

Mr. Handy, from the IMF's Middle East desk, acknowledged that the Egyptian government was aware of the problem and working to resolve it, but "this will take some time," he said.

Official statistics show that Egypt's trade deficit rose to \$9.26 billion in 1997 compared to \$9.47 billion in 1996, while non-oil exports increased from \$1.9 billion in 1996 to \$2.31 billion.

Over the past two years the Cairo government has reduced tariffs on some imported goods from five to 45 per cent to meet World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. The WTO gave Egypt 10 years to adjust.

Mr. Handy said Egypt's real challenge was, however, to increase its growth.

"The growth rate has come up to five per cent last year which is a significant achievement, but it is not fast enough," he said.

"We want to see the Egyptian economy growing at a faster pace ... to absorb the large labour force and reduce the level of poverty in the country," Mr. Handy said.

Egypt, with IMF help, launched a privatisation drive in 1991.

IMF chief proposes formula for reducing risk of globalisation

SINGAPORE (AFP) — International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Michel Camdessus on Monday proposed a five-point formula centred on greater transparency and stronger financial institutions to help Asia reduce vulnerability to the risks of globalisation.

He also called here for enhancing the quality and timeliness of economic and financial data and their availability to the public, building up the capacity of central banks and finance ministries, and stressed orderly capital-account liberalisation.

The managing director of the IMF was speaking at a seminar organised by the IMF-Singapore Regional Training Institute, which he inaugurated together with Singapore Finance Minister Richard Hu.

Some Asian governments have blamed rapid capital flows and currency speculation, made possible by the increasing integration of the global economy, for the region's current financial crisis.

To 1996, when private capital flows to developing and transition economies reached an all-time high of \$235 billion, nearly half went to Asia, Mr. Camdessus said.

"Clearly, some of those flows were not being invested wisely," he added.

Mr. Camdessus said Asia's woes stemming from currency depreciation since mid-1997 highlighted the risks for

countries tapping global capital markets.

"And so attention has naturally shifted from the benefits of globalisation to the many ways in which countries can reduce their vulnerability to its risks," he said.

He said the quick availability of economic and financial data would provide governments with reliable information on which to base policy decisions, and allow markets to have better information on which to base investment decisions.

Strengthening domestic financial systems would ensure that weaknesses in the system "will not tie policy-makers' hands when policies need to be tightened, while ensuring that saving is channelled into productive investment."

On capital-account liberalisation, he said it should proceed in an orderly and properly sequenced way so that countries can benefit from opportunities to accelerate growth, while minimising the risk of a financial crisis.

The IMF chief expressed confidence that Asia would again be the "showcase" not just of high growth and sizeable capital inflows but of what the region could do to improve policies and strengthen domestic institutions and the foundations for sustained, high-quality growth.

Despite caution expressed by some Asian economies on globalisation, Mr. Camdessus said the fact was that liberalisation of the external sector had allowed many of them to accelerate investment and growth, create more jobs, and reduce poverty.

Mr. Hu said the principles of transparency and accountability were fundamental to the successful reform of Asian institutions.

"East Asia has learnt the hard way that it does not pay to keep the markets guessing," Mr. Hu said, adding that "investors assume the worst when governments and companies are perceived to be withholding information."

It was important, he stressed, that East Asia did not see the drive towards transparency as an "external imposition."

Mr. Hu said institutional reform would help East Asia's public and private institutions regain credibility in world financial markets — "credibility which has been so badly battered in recent months."

The Regional Training Institute will offer 12 training courses in topics such as macro-economic adjustment and reform policies, financial programming, issues facing transition economies, monetary and exchange operations and banking supervision.

Daily

A review of news

Routing imports through danger to Aqaba

THE ASSOCIATION of foodstuff importers is proposing that a line be drawn in imports through ports other than Aqaba in a memorandum sent to the Jordanian government.

The association, headed by President Yusef Durrani, warned that the danger of foodstuff imports through the port of Aqaba is that it is a strategic point of the Jordanian coast, and that any disruption of imports through this port would be a disaster for the country.

Mr. Durrani said that the association had received information that the Jordanian government was planning to route all foodstuff imports through Aqaba, which would be a major risk to the country's food security.

He said that the association was proposing that a line be drawn in imports through ports other than Aqaba, and that the government should consider the risks of routing all imports through a single port.

Mr. Durrani said that the association was also proposing that the government should consider the risks of routing all imports through a single port, and that the government should consider the risks of routing all imports through a single port.

REUTERS

The Business of

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
US Dollar	1.7882	0.8822	1.0886	0.7511
DE Mark	0.5562	1.0000	0.6363	0.7511
GB Sterling	1.6605	2.9363	1.0000	0.6363
CH Franc	0.6754	119.31	0.4863	1.0000
JP Yen	0.0078	1.3437	0.0071	1.1384
CA Dollar	0.6948	1.2916	0.4238	1.0886
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0124	0.3448	0.8886
NL Guilder	0.5018	88.78	0.3021	74.25
FR Franc	0.1886	0.2882	0.1914	24.5616

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	TRY
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7086	1.7803	0.3717
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	3.3858	0.5517
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1881	1.0000	0.5517
Syrian Dinar	2.65	1.2808	9.9486	0.5517
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	1.0000	0.5517
Kuwait Dinar	3.2778	2.2328	12.2500	1.2500
Yemen Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0211	0.5517
Libyan Dinar	0.66	0.4681	2.4783	0.5517
Egyptian Pound	0.2927	0.2076	1.0878	0.5517

Energy

Oil	Last	Revised
Crude (oil)	14.16	14.67
Gas (oil)	15.41	15.94
Coal (oil)	14.16	14.67
Gas (oil)	12.09	12.90
Oil (oil)	158.00	158.00

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

1 Across: Trigger's lunch

2 Across: Verdi opera

3 Across: The works

4 Across: Region

5 Across: East

6 Across: restrictions

7 Across: "Haw"

8 Across: John or Deborah

9 Across: Badge of infamy

10 Across: Gasous element

11 Across: Capital of Morocco

12 Across: Engraver's tool

13 Across: Put off

14 Across: Walked

15 Across: worriedly

16 Across: Like the Arctic

17 Across: Quantity of groceries

18 Across: Perry's penner

19 Across: "Dennis the"

20 Across: Quaint hotel

21 Across: WWI arena

22 Across: Under

23 Across: "downers"

24 Across: Old card game

25 Across: Cool dude

26 Across: Metal sheets

27 Across: Long and lean

28 Across: Letters for the queen

29 Across: More fit

30 Across: Isolated

31 Across: Delate

32 Across: Fast fowl

33 Across: Congregation separator

34 Across: Weight-loss schemes

35 Across: Big bunny

36 Across: Saint's glow

37 Across: In the past

38 Across: Tropical lizard

39 Across: Flat

40 Across: Go bad

41 Across: Drinking spree

42 Across: Change completely

43 Down: Ridge, TN

44 Down: Exist

45 Down: Material like huckaback

46 Down: Name on cakes

47 Down: "St. Fire"

48 Down: Horse color

49 Down: Oslo's nat.

50 Down: Inquire

51 Down: Modern prof.

52 Down: Radiation

53 Down: bordering on microwave

54 Down: Queue's captain

55 Down: "Star Wars" princess

56 Down: Season of sacrifice

57 Down: Coral islet

58 Down: Lead balloon

59 Down: Spoken word

60 Down: Dental deposit

61 Down: Recipient of largesse

62 Down: One who brings joy

63 Down: Shoestrings

64 Down: Bike pumpers

65 Down: Owner's paper

66 Down: Concoct

67 Down: Dwarlike creatures

68 Down: toast

69 Down: Barbecue favorite

70 Down: Slide, like a snake

71 Down: Stupefied state

72 Down: Wagon

73 Down: Having no validity

74 Down: instrument

75 Down: Open a crack

76 Down: Chet's nemesis

77 Down: Highlander

78 Down: Have a meal

79 Down: Grow old

80 Down: Dinner roll

81 Down: Having no validity

82 Down: Youth

83 Down: John Lennon's Plastic Band

Peanuts

There's a great big alligator sneaking up behind you...

"April Fool!"

"April Fools' Day" was yesterday...

It took me all night to think of that...

Andy Capp

Thank you for your efforts, Vicar.

My pleasure, Flo. At long last I've got him started on the right track and into the right train of thought.

Now comes the hard part — getting the train moving.

Mutt'n'Jeff

Go you call this a ham sandwich?

Sure! I put ham on it!

Well, I haven't tried it yet.

Try it. I'll be right there with you.

I still don't see another bite!

Try it. I'll be right there with you.

I don't see any ham!

Oh, you must have gone right past it!

THE BETTER HALF

My parents had to end their European vacation early — people kept mistaking my dad for a gargoyle.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SCUFO

URFOL

SUCLEM

DROPEN

Answers: SCUFF, FLOOR, MULES, PENOD

JORDAN MAR

DAJAN

STUDIO HA

Many villas and apartments for rent and sale

Develop your own business at our shop

30% off

20 x 30 ft

Shmueli - Oppen

Grindlays Bank

Phone: 588404

Swiffish Tel: 62200

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Routing imports through Haifa seen posing danger to Aqaba, Jordan economy

**** THE ASSOCIATION** of foodstuff traders is proposing that a fine be imposed on imports through ports other than Aqaba. In a memorandum sent to the prime minister, association president Nizar Darwazah warned of the dangers from moves by some traders to buy basic and strategic foodstuffs through the Israeli port of Haifa. He said some shipments of rice, sugar, wheat, barley, coffee and corn were obtained by Jordanian wholesale traders through Israeli imports.

"Such a route inflicts big damage on the Jordanian economy," Mr. Darwazah wrote, indicating that the foodstuffs mentioned represent nearly two million tonnes of imports which provide the Aqaba port with no less than JD40 million in various income for services rendered. In addition, he said, the vessels which transport food imports to Aqaba are also used to export Jordanian phosphate, fertilisers and potash at low prices.

In his memorandum, Mr. Darwazah said a study conducted by the association showed that by importing through Haifa, traders can save up to \$13 per tonne compared to costs via Aqaba. Although land transport and handling costs between the port of Haifa and Amman is about \$5 per

UAE has long record of bank problems

DUBAI (AFP) — An alleged massive fraud in the Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB) is the latest in a series of bank crises in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The UAE had one of the most prosperous banking sectors in the world during the oil boom of the late 1970s and 1980s as it benefited from financing one of the biggest construction drives in modern history.

But after a sudden economic slump caused by a decline in oil prices from their peak of more than \$30 a barrel in 1980, many banks reported a U-turn in their business while some foreign units pondered pulling out.

The problem culminated in the mid-1980s, when oil prices deteriorated further, plunging the region into unprecedented stagnation, forcing governments to cut spending and shelving scores of major projects.

Banks then realised their deadly mistake of rushing to extend loans during the boom without ensuring enough funds to use in an emergency.

"It was a fatal mistake. Many banks suffered from large losses as hundreds of debtors failed to pay and others fled the country," one banker said.

"In the absence of enough reserves, the banking sector was severely hit by what we call the bad and doubtful debt problem," he added.

The crisis forced the banks to allocate large parts of their profits to provisions, while other units were compelled to merge to avert bankruptcy and the ensuing liquidation," the banker noted.

The problem triggered stronger supervision by the central bank.

But as the banks started to recover by amassing sufficient reserves, the banking system was again shaken by another major crisis in 1991.

The collapse of the Abu Dhabi-controlled Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) came as UAE banks were still sacrificing part of their earnings for loan loss provisions to be able to handle another crisis.

Several banks in the oil-rich Gulf country reported losses as they had large deposits with BCCI, which was ordered liquidated in 1992.

"The BCCI crisis had a big psychological impact in the UAE as it underscored the vulnerability of the banking sector," a bank manager said.

"That explains the sweeping reforms introduced by the central bank after that crisis as more problems could badly damage its financial reputation," he added.

The reforms included

Jordan promotes tourism in Dubai

DUBAI (Petra) — Jordan is taking part in the Dubai Arab Travellers Market Exhibition (the 1998 Forum) held at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

Marwan Khoury, the head of the Jordanian delegation to this year's event, said the Jordanian pavilion at the exhibition seeks to promote Jordan through films and promotional materials about tourism and archaeological places in Jordan, in addition to information leaflets on the facilities available to tourists in Jordan.

Taking part in the Jordanian pavilion are representatives for the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Tourism Promotion Corporation (TPC), Royal Jordanian (RJ), the Tourist Agents Association, Royal Wings and tourist and travel agents.

Mr. Khoury, director general of the TPC, said Jordanian travel and tourist agents held several meetings with their Arab and foreign counterparts, on the sidelines of the exhibition.

The exhibition, one of the most important specialised exhibitions in the Middle East, will run through May 10.

Swiss authorities approve merger of two biggest banks

ZURICH (AFP) — The Swiss Competition Commission has approved a merger between Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) and Swiss Bank Corporation (SBC), the two companies announced Tuesday.

The commission's clearance, given Monday, "enables merger preparations to be brought to a speedy conclusion," the two banks said in a statement welcoming the announcement.

"The conditions imposed are stringent but tolerable," Brussels gave its assent to the marriage in early March, but the U.S. Federal Reserve Board and the New York State Banking Department have still to pronounce on the union, said the statement, which predicts the merger will be completed in June.

The two banks announced in December they would merge to create United Bank of Switzerland, which will rank as one of the world's largest financial institutions with \$615 billion in assets and some \$400 billion under management.

SBC shareholders will own 40 per cent of the new entity and those of UBS will own 60 per cent.

Swiss competition authorities requested as a condition for their approval that the new group sell banking subsidiary Banca della Svizzera Italiana by the end of March and Bank of Solothurn SoBa within five years.

UBS is also obliged to sell 25 branches throughout Switzerland by the end of March, 1999.

Another condition is that existing credit relationships with small and mid-sized Swiss companies may not be reduced as a result of the merger if clients have up to four million Swiss francs in combined loans outstanding with the two partners.

The conditions "reflected the concern of the Competition Commission and of the two banks to mitigate the impact of the merger on small and medium-sized businesses," the statement said.

UBS and SBC control more than 25 per cent of the Swiss retail banking market.

The merger has raised the hackles of quite a few Swiss angered over job losses. The duo have announced that 7,000 people will be cut from payrolls in Switzerland and 15,000 worldwide.

UBS has set aside 4.4 billion Swiss francs and SBC 2.36 billion for restructuring costs linked with the merger.

"All internal preparations for the merger will be completed by the end of May so that the merger can be formalised over a weekend in June once U.S. regulatory approvals have been obtained," the banks said.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7892	0.6022	1.4805	1.3182	1.4382	1.7485	1.9829	6.9315	
DE Mark	0.5662		0.3401	0.8378	74.37	0.9132	986.78	1.1262	3.3527
GB Sterling	1.8605	2.9383		2.4891	218.42	2.3898	2897.97	3.3068	8.8438
CH Franc	0.6784	119.31	0.4063		88.78	0.9714	1177.88	134.38	4.0003
JP Yen	0.0078	1.2437	0.4871	1.1244		1.0930	13.26	151.35	4.8041
CA Dollar	0.6848	1.2916	0.4225	1.0566	1.09		1270.80	1.4651	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0134	0.3448	0.8848	1327.67	0.8244		11.42	3.3971
NL Guilder	0.0016	88.76	0.3021	74.29	88.00	0.7220	876.51		2.9764
FR Franc	0.1688	0.2982	0.1014	24.9515	22.17	0.2426	33.68	33.6800	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar		0.7080	3.7603	0.3770	3.3408	0.3091	3.6727	1514.80	3.4170
Jordan Dinar	1.4104		5.2890	0.5317	5.1361	0.4303	5.1801	2136.11	4.8188
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1891		0.1005	0.97	0.0814	0.88	403.83	0.9111
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8808	3.9485		6.66	0.8093	9.74	4017.86	9.0644
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	1.0301	1.0301		0.0838	1.01	415.98	0.9385
Kuwait Dinar	3.2775	2.3238	12.2820	1.2356	11.93		12.04	4983.85	0.9385
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1830	1.0211	1.0208	0.9913	0.0831		412.37	0.9304
Lebanese/1000	0.68	0.4681	2.4763	0.2488	2.4040	0.2015	2.4280		2.2562
Egyptian	0.2927	0.2075	1.0975	0.1103	1.0655	0.0893	1.0748	443.23	

Energy									
Oil	Last	Previous							
Brent	14.16	14.87							
W. Texas	15.41	15.94							
Bonny	14.16	14.87							
Dubai	13.08	12.90							
U.S. Gas	188.00	188.00							

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	302.7	303.2							
Silver (oz's)	8.09	8.12							
Platinum (oz's)	396.1	396.1							
AL (3 Months)	1438	1440							
CU (3 Months)	1870	1871							
ZINC (3 Months)	1125	1126							
Lead (3 Months)	984	986							
NI (3 Months)	6520	6526							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng.	% Chng.	High	Low	P/Cls		
New York	DOW JONES	9147.82	-44.84	-0.49	9188.14	9127.39	9182.66		
New York	S&P 500	1118.17	-5.9	-0.53	1122.07	1113.7	1122.07		
London	FT-SE 100	5886.5	-23.8	-0.4	6064.8	5872.6	6010.3		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	15801.1	-40.18	-0.26	15868.8	15463.8	15841.3		
Paris	CAC 40	3944.91	-28.34	-0.74	3963.53	3931.51	3974.25		
Frankfurt	DAX	6232.03	-82.63	-1.33	6282.6	6221.71	6314.65		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (c/lbs)	134.25	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1917	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	252.5	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	91.8	Spot							
Soya (c/lbs)	28.47	Spot							
Tea (kg/kg)	140	Spot							
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	410	Spot							

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	Buy	Sell							
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.1789	1.1848							
DE Mark	0.3972	0.3992							
CH Franc	0.4746	0.477							
FR Franc	0.1185	0.1191							
JP Yen	0.633	0.6387							
NL Guilder	0.3825	0.3843							
IT Lira	0.0226	0.0245							

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

JORDAN MARKETPLACE ** JORDAN MARKETPLACE ** JORDAN MARKETPLACE

DAJANI JEWELLERS. "A Symphony of Style"

Amra Forum Hotel. Phone 5527418
Amman - Cairo - Rio

Many villas and apartments for rent and sale

Furnished & Unfurnished

For more information call:
Abdoun Real Estate
5920605/5920609/079-30007
E-mail address: abdoun@go.com.jo

STUDIO HAIG

Professional quality in 1 hour service

Develop your ideas at our shop and get JUMBO photo sets

30% larger

Free development

20 x 30 cm

Shmelsani - Opposite Grindlays Bank
Phone: 5804042
Sweilish Tel: 822891

DIPLOMAT

5510427 / 8-9

WELLO

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS SECTION CALL

5667171 EXT. 223

OR

5684311 - 5699634 EXT. 42

Your Address In Amman

CRYSTAL

Quality Serviced Suites

* One & Two Bedrooms Fully Equipped Kitchens * Daily & Long Stay * Reasonable Rates

5th Circle
Tel: 5692672 - Fax: 5674551
e-mail: CRYSTAL@go.com.jo

L'olivier Restaurant

Abdoun 5929564

LOOKING FOR TENDER, JUICY FRESH PORK CUTS

At Competitive Prices

Come to the Pioneer

AL - FUAIS FRESH PORK SHOP
Near the Baccalaureat School
Tel: 720459

Chops 4.5/kg Ribs 4.5/kg Leg 4.5/kg

VIRSES

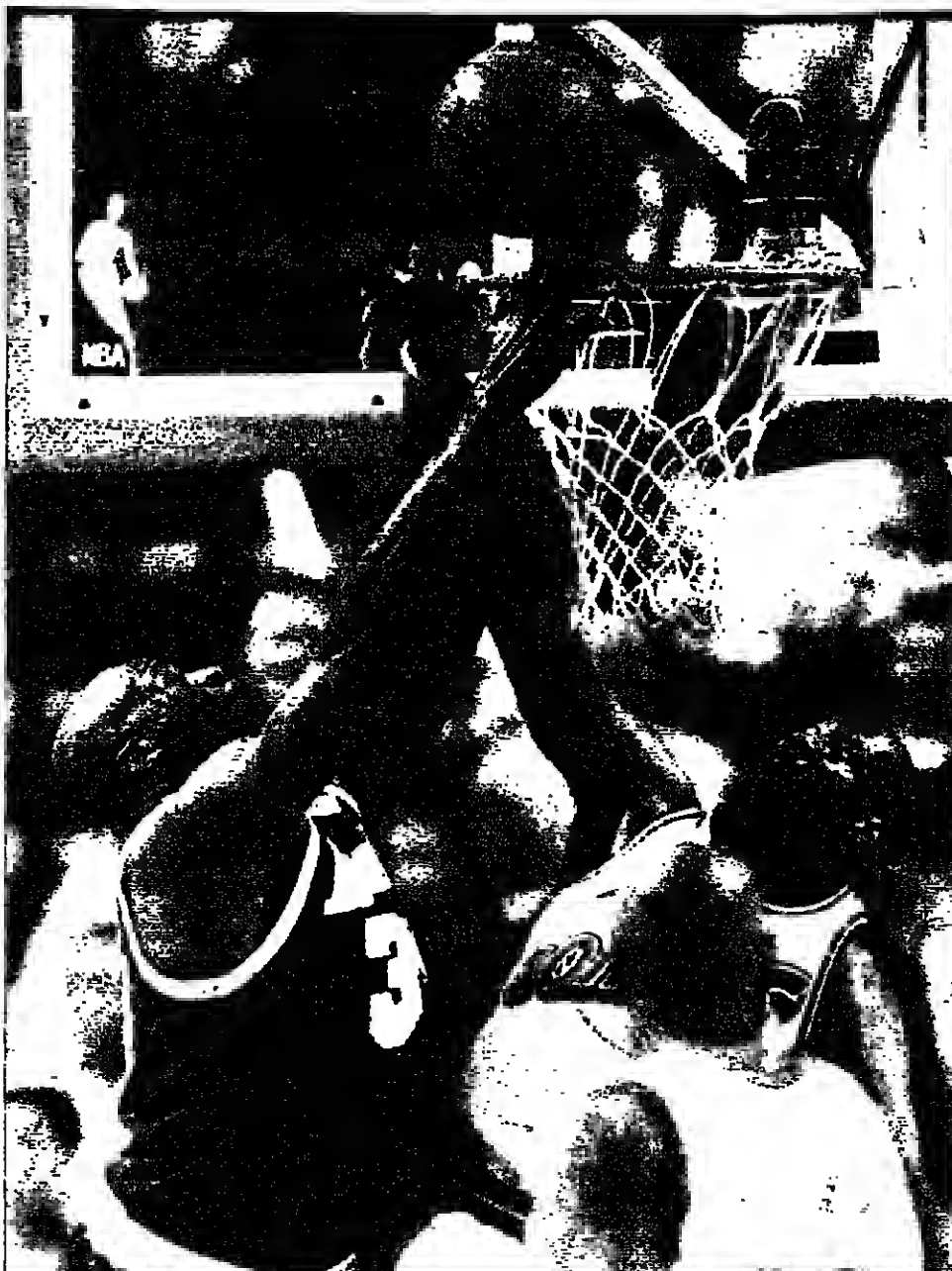
Pub & Restaurant

Join Us & Judge for yourself

LIVE MUSIC MONDAY & THURSDAY

Open for Lunch Daily

Sweilish - Behind Rujal Bookshop
Tel: 81690 Cellular 019 - 22124



Los Angeles Lakers Shaquille O'Neal (35) and Seattle SuperSonics Jerome Kersey battle for a rebound in second quarter play in the first game of the Western Conference Semifinals at Key Arena. The Sonics won 106-92. Sonics Vin Baker is in foreground (Reuters photo)

Payton sparks Sonics past Lakers

SEATTLE (AFP) — Gary Payton scored 25 points and the Seattle SuperSonics dominated the fourth quarter to defeat the Los Angeles Lakers 106-92 here Monday in the opener of their playoff series.

The Sonics shrugged off their narrow escape in the first round of the National Basketball Association playoffs to grab a 1-0 lead in the second round best-of-seven Western Conference matchup.

The Sonics outscored the Lakers 28-13 in the fourth quarter for the triumph after the Lakers outscored Seattle 29-16 in the third. "We got aggressive in the fourth quarter and everything worked out," said Payton, who helped Seattle rally from the brink of elimination with two first-round victories over Minnesota.

The Lakers and Sonics finished with identical records, but Seattle claimed the Pacific Division title, and home-court advantage in their series, by winning three of four regular-season meetings.

"This is a heated rivalry," Payton said. "We both know we're good clubs. We had the same record. We know they are going to make a lot of adjustments and play with a lot of urgency."

Seattle reserve forward Jerome Kersey, a 14-year NBA veteran and former Laker, scored 12 points and pulled down seven rebounds.

"I just worked hard, tries to stay around the boards, got some nice looks at shots," Kersey said. "You have to keep your composure and when you get the chance to make plays, you have to."

Kersey's scouting tips were instrumental in Seattle's defense shutting down Laker guards Kobe Bryant and Eddie Jones in the fourth quarter.

"You have to read Kobe and Eddie, find out little things about players in practice you can come back and use," Kersey said. Hersey Hawkins added 20 points for

Seattle. Shaquille O'Neal led the Lakers with 27 points and 11 rebounds. The Sonics outscored the taller Lakers and could pull ahead 2-0 in the series here on Wednesday.

"Our team will see how big it's going to be," Sonics coach George Karl said. "They don't want to give us a 2-0 lead. They will fight as hard as they have ever fought."

Two more second-round series begin Tuesday, with Indiana hosting New York in the Eastern Conference and Utah playing host to San Antonio in the Western Conference.

The Pacers, guided by first-year coach Larry Bird, won 2 of 3 over the Knicks in the regular season. Indiana is led by guard Reggie Miller, who averages 25.4 points in playoff games against the rival Knicks.

"We're going to be in for a war of a series," Indiana guard Mark Jackson said. "They are a tough physical team and they don't give up."

Injured New York center Patrick Ewing is expected to miss the first two games of the series but might return from torn right wrist ligaments that have kept him out since December.

Regular-season champion Utah, which was extended to the five-game limit by Houston in round one, takes on a squad paced by three seven-foot players, including veteran David Robinson and NBA Rookie of the Year Tim Duncan.

Reigning champion Chicago carries a 1-0 lead into game two against Charlotte on Wednesday as NBA scoring leader Michael Jordan, NBA rebound leader Dennis Rodman and versatile Scottie Pippen continue their quest for a sixth NBA crown in eight years.

"Michael is going to score his 30-some points," Charlotte's Vlade Divac said. "You have to concentrate on the other people and not let them kill you."

Rain wipes out first day at U.S. Red Clay Championships

CORAL SPRINGS (AFP) — Rain halted the opening matches of the \$245,000 ATP America's Red Clay Championships here Monday.

Only three matches began before showers started, postponing further play until Tuesday, when top seed and

defending champion Jason Stoltenberg of Australia is set to face compatriot qualifier Andrew Ilie.

Armenia's Sargis Sargsian led eighth seed Davide Sanguineti of Italy 6-3, 4-2, when play was halted.

Ramon Delgado of Paraguay led Norwegian

Christian Ruud 6-3, 4-5, when their matches were halted.

In the only other match under way, Belgium's Johan Van Herck won a first-set tie-breaker over Spain's Juan Antonio Marin but lost the first game of the second set.

Asian crisis hits lucrative Olympic programme

SYDNEY (AFP) — The downward spiral of many Asian currencies has hit sales of the Sydney Olympic's most lucrative promotion — a commemorative coin programme.

It was expected to reap at least A\$250 million (\$168 million), with royalties adding millions more, but the regional crisis has forced the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) to change its sales tack.

The second batch of a collection that will eventually total 52 coins was released here Tuesday and includes one gold, two silver and three bronze-aluminium coins.

Perth Mint chief executive Don Mackay-Coghill said sales of the gold coins were higher than expected, but silver and bronze were down. Asia was a particularly hard place to forecast,

Mackay-Coghill said.

China, Japan and Taiwan were markets where sales were expected to go well but South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines had been particularly hard hit but the region's financial turmoil.

Marketing of the coins would be altered accordingly, he said.

Mackay-Coghill said the base metal (bronze-aluminium) coin was forecast to be a particularly hot item in China, although the gold and silver would be hit by high import duties.

"(The Chinese) see the coins as hard assets and investment opportunities," he said.

The new gold coin features a track-suited athlete and sells for 380 dollars.

One of the silver coins, costing \$49, was partly

designed by Nova Peris-Kneebone, who became the first Aboriginal athlete to win Olympic women's hockey team in Atlanta.

It depicts the arrival of early European settlers and is titled "A Sea Change". Another silver coin features two white-pointer sharks.

The bronze-aluminium coins, at \$26.85, are dedicated to cycling, soccer and triathlon.

Six more batches will be released in the lead-up to the 2000 Games.

The National Olympic Committees of 43 countries are associated with the program, each receiving three per cent of the wholesale price of the coins sold in their countries.

United shrug off title blues to rout Leeds

LONDON (AFP) —

Manchester United, who lost their Premiership crown to Arsenal 24 hours earlier, showed their determination to end a disappointing season on a high with a 3-0 win over hater rivals Leeds on Monday. Arsenal denied United a third consecutive league title — and a fifth in six years — when they trounced Everton 4-0 at Highbury, sparking wild celebrations in north London and despair in Manchester.

But Alex Ferguson's side, who will finish the season trophy-less for only the second time this decade, showed they had lost none of their motivation as they tore into George Graham's Leeds.

Ryan Giggs struck with an early header before a Denis Irwin penalty and a David Beckham volley wrapped up a comfortable win over Leeds who had Norwegian Gunnar Halle sent off for a second bookable offence on 63 minutes. The Red Devils took the lead after just six minutes following superb work by Gary Neville on the right flank.

The England full-back did superbly to keep the ball in play before advancing into the area and timing his cross to perfection for Giggs who



Manchester United soccer star Andy Cole (L) shoots past Leeds United's David Wetherall (2L) as Gary Kelly looks on during their match in Manchester. Manchester United defeated Leeds United 3-0 (Reuters photo)

hurled a simple header for his 50th league goal and ninth of the season.

For a team that normally prides itself on defence, it was the eighth goal Leeds had conceded in four games

and considering they had not scored themselves at Old Trafford since the Premiership began in 1992, the prospects looked bleak from then on.

The second goal came on

the half-hour from a harmless-looking cross as Irwin floated a ball into the Leeds box, which led to Austrian centre-half Martin Hiden climbing all over the back of "Teddy" Sheringham.

Referee Gary Willard had no hesitation in pointing to the spot and up stepped Irwin to side-foot home his fourth goal this term, sending Nigel Martyn the wrong way.

Leeds — still needing a point to be cast-iron certainties of playing in next season's UEFA Cup — never troubled keeper Raimond van der Gouw during the opening 45 minutes. It was not until the 48th minute that van der Gouw finally had a shot to save, although Australian striker Harry Kewell's 25-yard shot was directed straight at the Dutchman.

But any hopes of an unlikely Leeds fightback were killed off by England midfielder Beckham who made it 3-0 in the 59th minute. Andy Cole's cross from the left glanced off the head of Hiden and Beckham crashed a sweet right-foot volley from 18 yards beyond Martyn.

Leeds' afternoon went from bad to worse in the 63rd minute when Norwegian international Halle was given his marching orders after a late challenge from behind on debutant Wes Brown.

Del Piero to stay with Juventus

MILAN (AFP) —

Alessandro Del Piero is about to kill off recent speculation surrounding a possible move to England by signing a new contract with Juventus.

The broad lines of the new deal were set out during a weekend meeting between Del Piero's agent Claudio Pasqualin and the club's top three officials — Roberto Bettiga, Luciano Moggi and Antonio Giraudo.

Del Piero will earn around \$4 million a season for five seasons, using Pasqualin's argument that he is Italy's answer to Ronaldo and should therefore be paid something like the Brazilian's wages.

The deal will be a blow to English Premiership sides like Manchester United, who were hoping Juventus would part with their star player — just as the club had done in the past with Roberto Baggio and Gianluca Vialli.

Del Piero has had his best-ever season with the reigning champions — his 31 goals powering Juventus towards their third league title in four years and this month's European Cup final against Real Madrid.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

McRae leads in Rally of Corsica

AJACCIO (AFP) — Scotsman Colin McRae increased his lead to 42.5 seconds after the opening three stages on Tuesday, the second day of the Rally of Corsica. McRae, driving a Subaru Impreza, won stages seven and eight on Tuesday morning to increase his advantage by over 20 seconds. Spaniard Carlos Sainz, in a Toyota Corolla, won the ninth stage — the third of Tuesday's six specials — to move into second place ahead of Italian Piero Liatti (Subaru) and Frenchman Francois Delecour (Peugeot 306 Maxi). McRae made the most of his good fortune. He was disqualified on Monday after a tyre violation, but was reinstated on appeal. World champion Tommi Makinen of Finland did not survive the first day. His Mitsubishi, which had been seized the early pace, dropped out at the start of the fifth stage. The rally features 399.18km of special stages and covers a total of 1,544.87km over fast, rugged undulating roads before finishing late on Wednesday.

Piccirillo takes WBU crown

CATANIA (AFP) — Michele Piccirillo was crowned the new World Boxing Union (WBU) welterweight champion here on Monday night when the challenger beat fellow Italian Alessandro Duran by a technical knockout in the fifth round. Duran was close to being knocked out in the third, but pulled through until the fifth, when he offered no defence to Piccirillo's final hammering. The referee stopped the fight just as Duran's manager threw in the towel. Former European champion Piccirillo now has a 26-1 record, while Duran dropped to 44-8.

EF Language surges into lead

BALTIMORE (AFP) — Overall leader EF Language, skipped by Paul Cayard, had surged into the lead in the Whitbread Round-The-World race by early Tuesday, but only 10.3 nautical miles separated all nine yachts on the eighth leg. The fleet elected to take the safe route across the Atlantic Ocean, heading south into the Gulf Stream rather than taking the shorter — and considerably more dangerous — Great Circle route to the north. The fleet set sail on Sunday from Annapolis on the 3,390-nautical mile leg to La Rochelle in France. Gunnar Krantz's Swedish Match was in second place at the 0600GMT report, one

mile behind EF Language, with Dutch entry BrunelSunergy third.

Francis to be offered new deal

BIRMINGHAM (AFP) — Former England international striker Trevor Francis is to be offered a new contract as manager of English first division club Birmingham City despite the club missing out on a promotion playoff spot. Club chairman David Gold said Tuesday that he will offer Francis a new two-year deal that would keep him at St. Andrews until the year 2000. "Trevor has done a super job and we would like to keep him here," Gold said. "I am sure that we will come to a satisfactory conclusion."

Zetterberg Belgian Footballer of the Year

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Swedish midfield player Par Zetterberg was Tuesday named Belgian Footballer of the Year in a poll of his fellow professionals. Zetterberg, 27, who plays for Anderlecht, won the honour for the second straight year and the third time overall. The Anderlecht skipper topped the poll with 474 points to finish well clear of Branko Strupar, the Croatian who plays for RC Genk (243 pts) and veteran Belgian international midfielder Franky Van der Elst of FC Brugge (179 pts). Zetterberg also won the fair play award, while Eric Gerets was named Coach of the Year for leading FC Brugge to the league title and the Belgian Cup final.

Things go from bad to worse for Real

MADRID (AFP) — Real Madrid slumped to a shock 2-0 home defeat against visiting Zaragoza Monday night — putting increased pressure on themselves if they want to finish runners-up to Barcelona and ensure a place in the European Champions league next season. Barcelona have already won the first division title and are a massive 13 points clear of second-placed Athletic Bilbao. Monday's defeat puts Real one point behind Athletic Bilbao and only one point clear of Real Sociedad, Mallorca and Betis who are all still in with a chance of taking the number two spot. Real, who could also qualify for the European Champions League if they beat Italian giants Juventus in this season's final, were rocked by a penalty on the hour from Jamelli while Gustavo Lopez put the issue beyond doubt with a second goal for the visitors with ten minutes left to play.

Sports

SCOREBOARD

National League	Finals
San Francisco 49ers	Minnesota Vikings
Cincinnati Bengals	Philadelphia Eagles
Cleveland Browns	Los Angeles Rams
Arizona Cardinals	NY Giants
San Diego Chargers	Milwaukee Bucks

American League	Finals
White Sox	Atlanta Braves
Oakland Athletics	Toronto Blue Jays

National Hockey League	Finals
First round playoffs series best of 7	Western Conference quarterfinals
Edmonton Oilers	Colorado Avalanche
Edmonton Oilers	Edmonton Oilers

Spanish First Division	Finals
Real Madrid	Zaragoza

German Open	Finals
David Flanagan	Albert Bertran

Qatar Farnes (Rabat)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (Ned)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (Spa)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (AUS)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (GIR)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

Qatar Farnes (SPT)	Finals
Jan Simek	Jan Simek

